

2017

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Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**



DISTRICT 16 HUNTING PROSPECTS

Clallam and west Jefferson counties

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DISTRICT 16 GENERAL OVERVIEW

District 16 includes Clallam County and the western portion of Jefferson County on the Olympic Peninsula. There are eight Game Management Units (GMUs) in District 16. Coyle GMU 624 and Olympic GMU 621 extend into District 15 (Mason, Kitsap & East Jefferson counties). Matheny GMU 618 is not included in District 16, although some maps may indicate otherwise. See the District 17 hunting prospects for information on that GMU

We encourage you to choose District 16 for some or all of your scouting and hunting this season. Please share with us stories and photos of your adventures in District 16 for us to include in future prospects (anita.mcmillan@dfw.wa.gov).

Each GMU in District 16 has its own unique mix of land ownerships: private residential, private agricultural, private forest industrial, state and federal forest, and park lands. Most higher-elevation forest lands are in public ownership (U.S. Forest Service and Olympic National Park (ONP)).

Lower elevation foothills in general are private industrial forest lands and state lands managed by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR).



District 16 Game Management Units

EAST DISTRICT 16

The eastern quarter of the district is the Dungeness Basin (western Coyle 624 and northern portion of Olympic GMU 621). The Dungeness watershed offers a rich diversity of habitats from high elevation, rain-shadow mountains to the lower watershed with plentiful wetland habitats dispersed amidst a mix of riparian and bygone prairie/oak forest. The prairie is now a rural mix of small and large farms with scattered developments. In the lower basin there are some choice private duck hunting club ownerships and a few well enjoyed public waterfowl hunting areas. Waterfowl hunting opportunities have been expanded in the eastern portion of the district in recent years. The Dungeness Basin and the smaller watersheds east of the Elwha are areas where deer are in such high numbers there are frequent complaints by the rural and urban residents. The high visibility of deer in the Coyle and Olympic GMUs extends into the forestlands which have an ideal ratio of forest openings. The availability of deer for harvest is enhanced within Deer Area 6020 where harvest of “any deer” during regular seasons is allowed. The main challenge for hunting in eastern District 16 is the high amount of private ownership, so time needs to be invested into arranging your hunting access on the target private lands.

WEST DISTRICT 16

The “West End” (Hoko, Dickey, Sol Duc, Goodman, and Clearwater) has the bulk of the elk in the district, while the deer are sparse in these same GMUs. Various sub-herds of elk are located within District 16. Many elk herds are year-round residents that remain in lower elevation habitats. There are some herds that make regular migrations into the higher elevations, most always being on Olympic National Park (ONP) habitat. There are opportunities to harvest elk as they migrate out of ONP high country and follow river drainages to low elevations during the hunting season. The eastern portion of the Clearwater (GMU 615) is in DNR ownership and contains higher-elevation areas bordering ONP.

Varied hunting opportunities exist within District 16, from waterfowl hunting on designated shoreline and wetland areas along the Strait of Juan de Fuca, to forest grouse, deer, elk, bear, and cougar hunting on private commercial and public forest land. Both state (DNR) and federal (U.S. Forest Service) lands provide hunting opportunities for a variety of species within the district.

ELK

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

The elk within District 16 are Roosevelt elk. For ongoing monitoring and population trend studies there are many elk throughout the district with radio collars, ear tags and transmitters. Some elk are wearing VHF collars while others are wearing GPS collars. It is very likely that you will observe elk that have been captured and are marked. If you observe a marked elk in an

unusual location or possibly even find a collar, you are encouraged to share that information with the district biologist.

District 16 contains various sub-herds of the Olympic Elk Herd, one of 10 herds identified in the state. Elk numbers peaked in the late 1970s with a conservative estimate of about 12,000 elk outside of Olympic National Park, estimates based on historical harvest information. Current population estimates are based on a combination of harvest data, telemetry studies, and mark-resight surveys. These techniques yielded a fall population estimate of approximately 8,600 in the Game Management Units (GMUs) surrounding Olympic National Park in the year 2000. The current estimated population of the Olympic Elk herd is likely lower. Much of the elk hunting within the district is restricted to a limited entry, 3-point minimum, bull-only harvest. Some elk herds migrate down from high alpine meadows in Olympic National Park to lowland winter range. Public lands and private commercial timberlands bordering the park are good prospects. Hunters often scout for elk that leave Olympic National Park and travel along major river drainages. Keep in mind that it is unlawful to hunt in ONP. Elk groups in GMU 603 (Pysht) have increased slightly in the past few years.

WHICH GMU SHOULD ELK HUNTERS HUNT?

The Clearwater (GMU 615), Dickey (GMU 602), and Sol Duc (GMU 607) have the highest elk harvest in District 16. These units contain large acreages of public land, much of it without restricted access. Be aware there are gated roads in all of these GMUs, some allowing hunters access and others closed to the public.

The Olympic GMU 621 is limited to state permit elk and tribal elk harvest.

The Hoko (GMU 601), Pysht (GMU 603), and Coyle (GMU 624) have very limited opportunities for general season hunters. Most of these units contain private land and many of the roads on timber lands are gated.

Hunting on DNR lands, U.S. Forest Service lands, and private timber lands within the district can yield good results. However, it is important to note that there are several areas where vehicular access is limited. Hunters need to obtain permission to hunt on private lands and must obey all posted signs and regulations.

Hunting seasons have been established not only to allow recreational use but also to manage elk populations within the district. The eastern district rarely has a report of elk harvest from the general season in GMU 624. Harvest within Elk Area 6071 is limited to damage control, occasionally involving Master Hunter elk hunts from the Region 6 permit list. Check the [WA Big Game Hunting Pamphlet](#) or the WDFW website for more information.

A thesis on elk with research conducted in the Hoko (GMU 601) and Dickey (GMU 602) is available on this website: [Movements and Habitat Use of Female Roosevelt Elk in Relation to Human Disturbance on the Hoko and Dickey Game Management Units, Washington](#).

[Annual harvest reports](#) and harvest statistics for elk based on hunter reporting can be found on the WDFW website.

See [District 15 Hunting Prospects](#) for more information about GMU 621 and GMU 624.

DISTRICT 16 ELK HUNTING AND HARVEST RECORDS

Following are some graphs that display the harvest and hunting effort including success in the game management units within District 16. If there are any questions about these graphs contact District Biologist McMillan at anita.mcmillan@dfw.wa.gov.

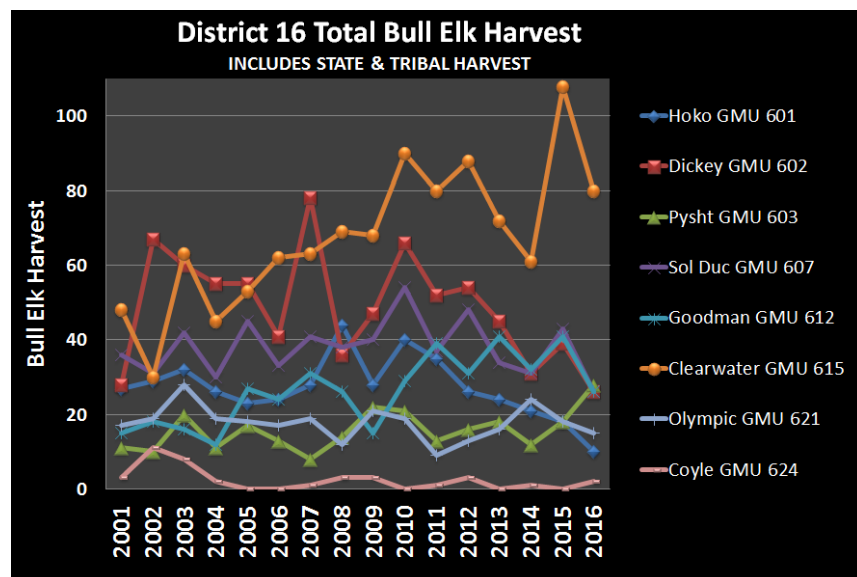
Bull Elk Harvest

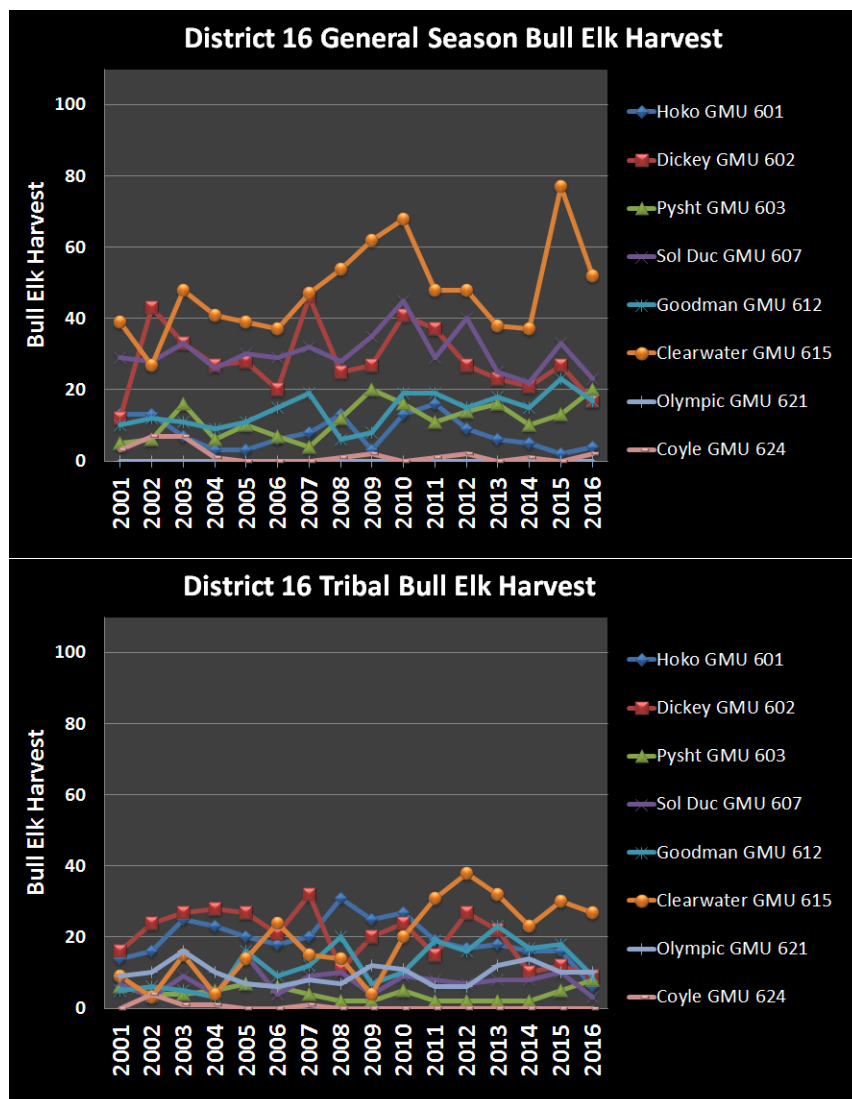
The Olympic Peninsula elk harvest reflects the general elk abundance, most harvest occurring in the western GMUs (Figure 2). The west end elk are distributed as many small herds scattered well throughout the GMUs. The east Olympic Peninsula elk are individual herds with distinct use patterns within watersheds. Much of the available habitat in eastern Olympic Peninsula is not currently being utilized by elk. Hunting on the east Olympic Peninsula takes more deliberate planning to find the herds and make the most of elk harvest opportunities.

The total bull elk harvest within the western GMUs (GMU 615-Clearwater, GMU 602- Dickey and GMU 607-Sol Duc) consistently contribute the highest bull harvest levels, while the eastern GMUs (GMU 621-Olympic, GMU 624-Coyle, GMU 603-Pysht) consistently have low bull harvest levels, rarely over 20 annually.

The general season bull harvest is typically between 50 and 70 percent of the total bull harvest.

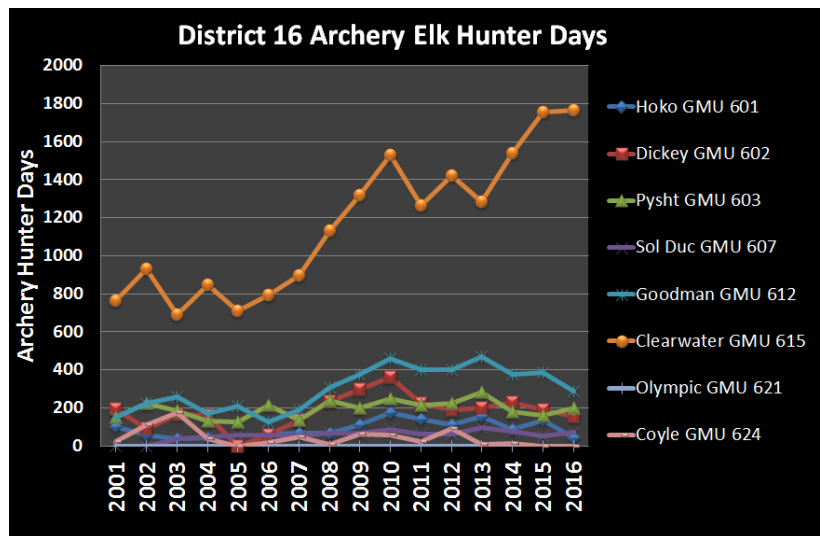
Tribal bull harvest has averaged between 30 and 40 percent of the Total bull harvest. In a couple GMUs the Tribal bull harvest has been a higher percentage of the Total bull harvest, 55 percent for GMU 621 and 70 percent for GMU 601.





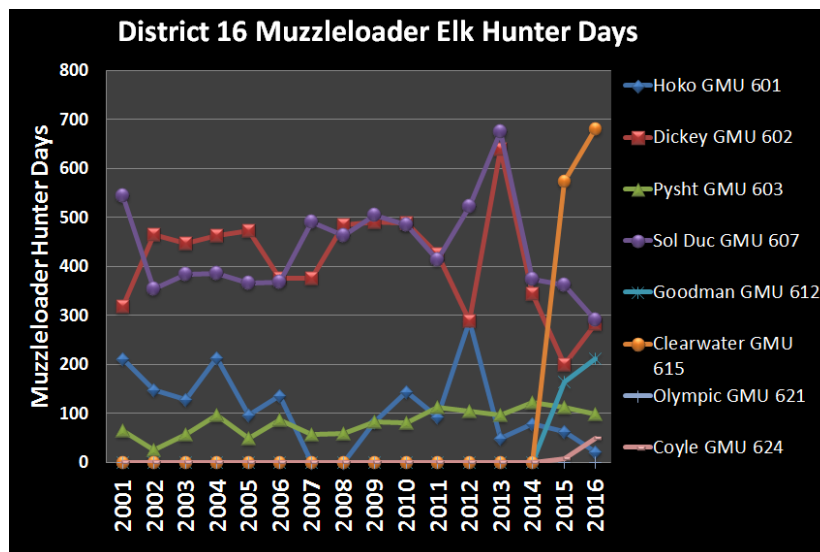
Archery Elk Hunting

Archery elk hunting in District 16 is predominately occurring in Clearwater GMU 615 (Figure 3). The Goodman GMU 612, Dickey GMU 602 and Pysht GMU 603 have a much lower level of archery hunter days ranging between 200 and 400 days annually. The Olympic GMU 601, Coyle GMU 621 and Hoko GMU 624 had the lowest level of archery hunter days ranging from 0 to 200 days annually.



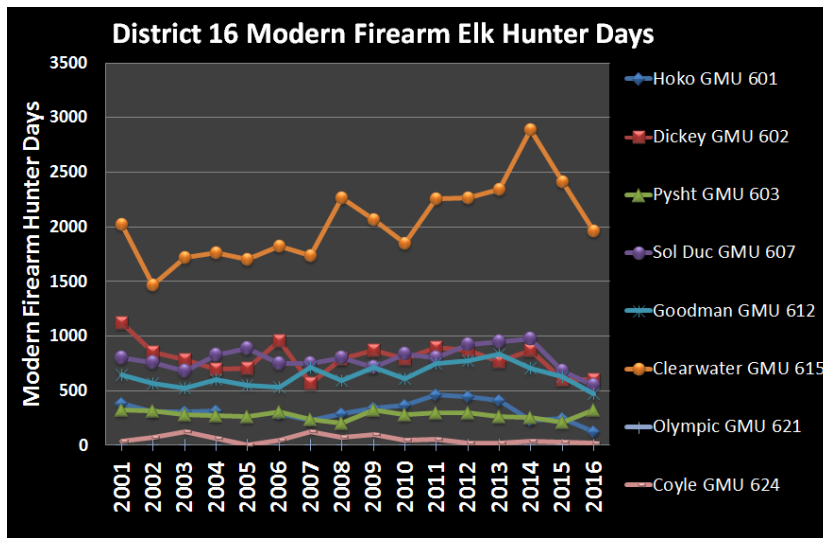
Muzzleloader Elk Hunting

Muzzleloader elk hunting has been concentrated in Dickey GMU 602 and Sol Duc GMU 607 for many years (Figure 3). This changed in 2015 when muzzleloader elk hunting opened up in the Clearwater GMU 615 and Goodman GMU 612. A high level of participation was reported in the Clearwater GMU 615, while at the same time there was a reported drop in muzzleloader elk hunter days for the Sol Duc GMU 607 and Dickey GMU 602.



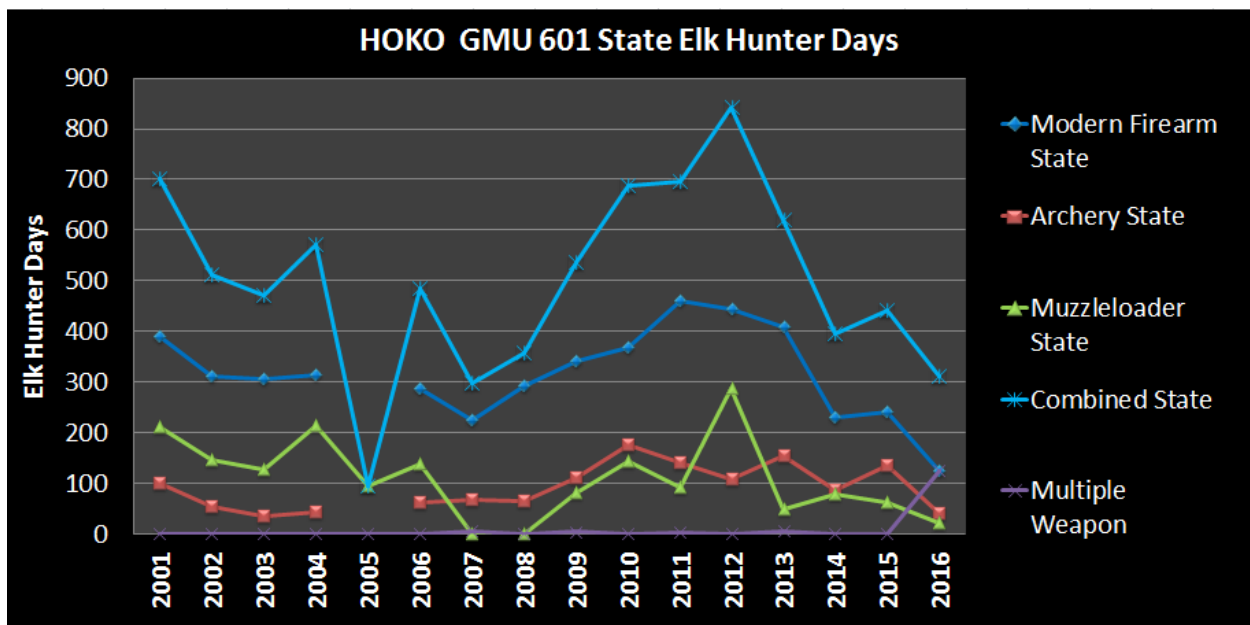
Modern Firearm Elk Hunting

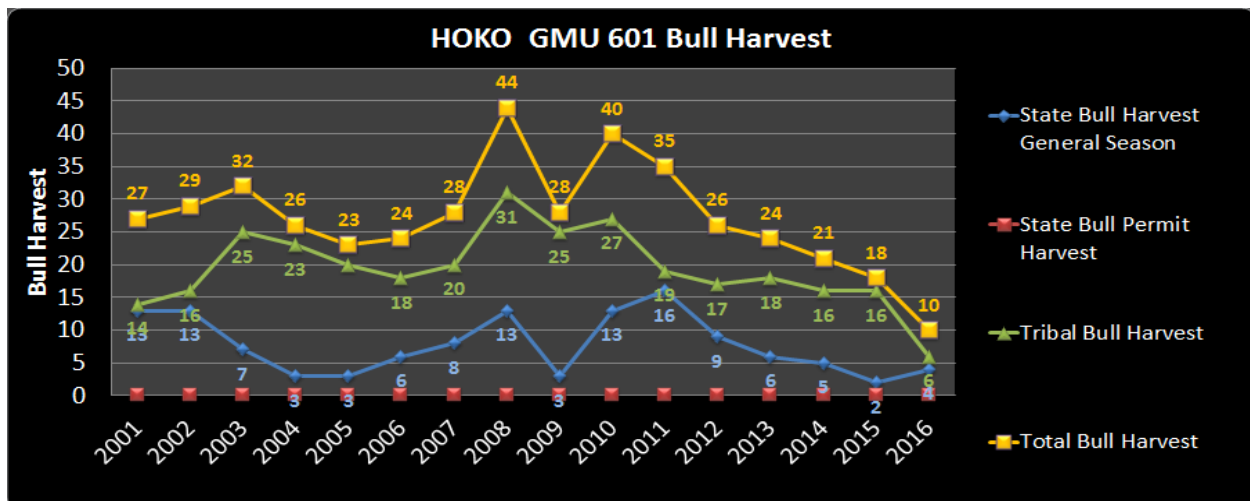
The Modern Firearm Elk Hunter Days has decreased since the highs in 2014, especially in the Clearwater GMU 615 (Figure 3). In GMU 615, the modern firearm hunting pressure dropped drastically in 2015 and 2016, while at the same time there was a 600-day increase in muzzleloader hunting and a 200-day increase in archery hunting. The total number of state hunter days has remained fairly constant, while the pressure has shifted from modern firearm to archery and muzzleloader.



GMU 601 (Hoko) Elk Hunting

Hoko Bull elk harvest has been declining for both State Hunter Harvest and Tribal Harvest since 2011, the lowest since 2001. The Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) has been between 0.00 and 0.03 harvested elk per hunter day, with archery CPUE slightly higher than modern firearm CPUE, both higher than the muzzleloader CPUE. The elk CPUE in the Hoko GMU 601 has had a slightly declining trend since 2001. Overall participation by state hunters in the Hoko GMU 601 has dropped to about 300 days annually, primarily modern firearm and multiple season hunters.



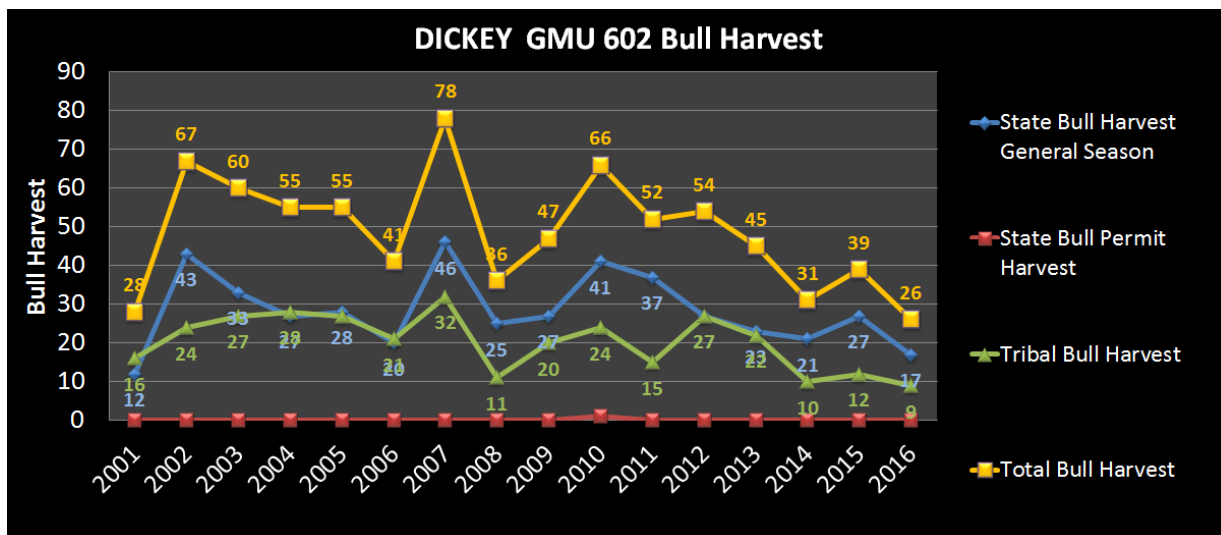


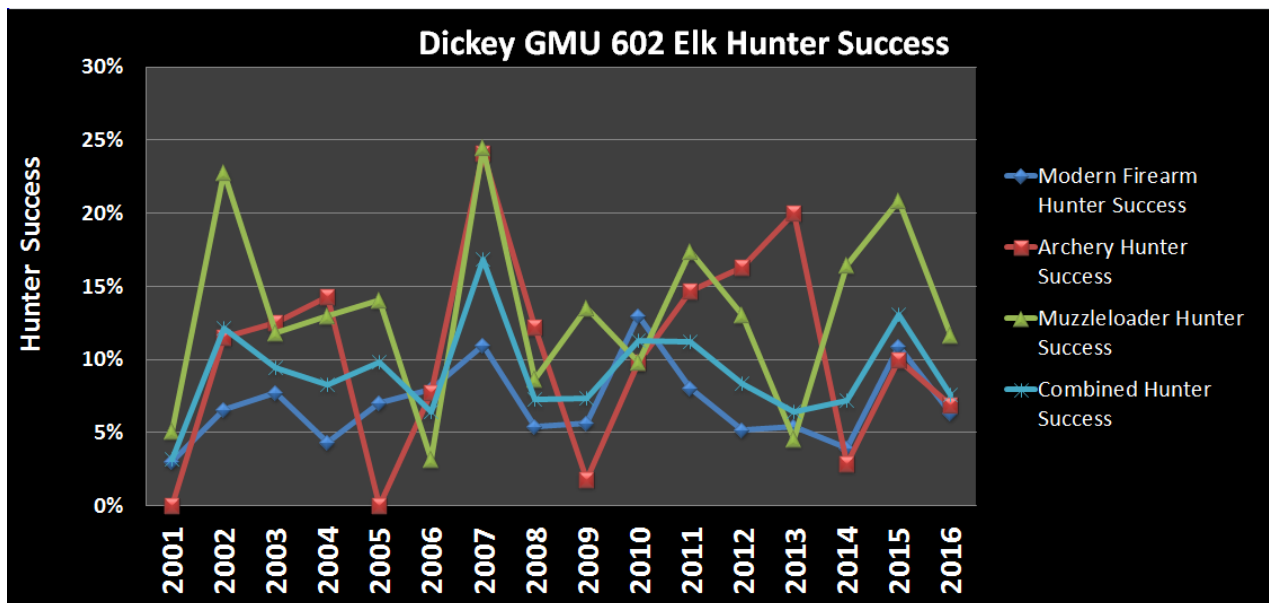
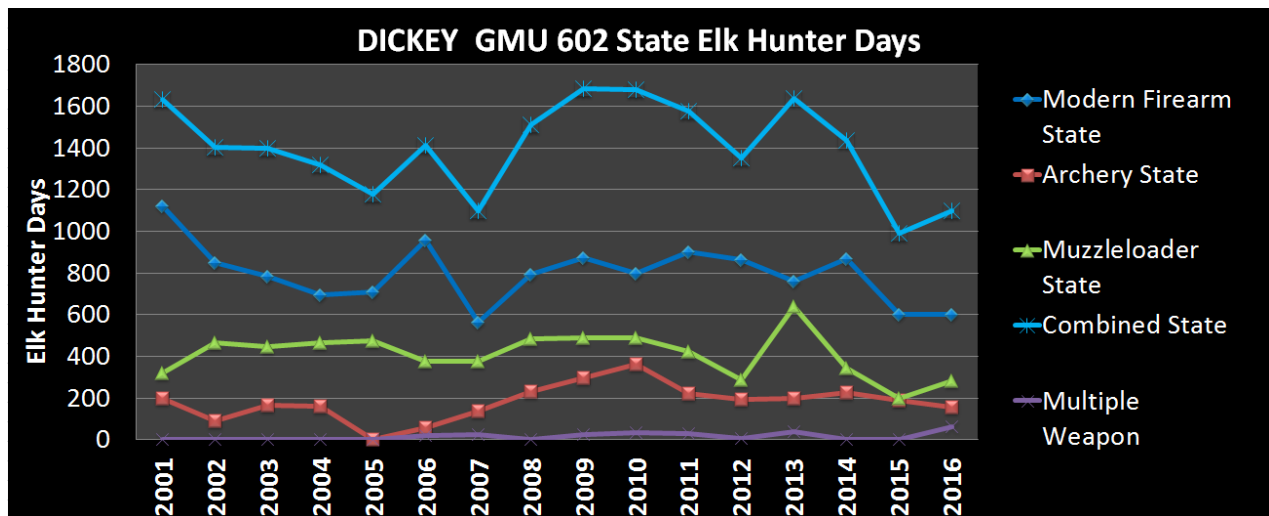
GMU 602 (Dickey) Elk Hunting

The reported total bull harvest has been declining since 2010, and in 2016 it dropped to 26, slightly lower than the previous low of 28 in 2001. During 2015 and 2016 decreases in modern firearm and muzzleloader state hunter participation were documented.

The overall trend in tribal elk harvest in the Dickey GMU 602 has been a slight decline since 2001. During earlier years the bull harvest totaled 11-32, with recent years having dropped to 9-12 bull elk harvested annually.

The hunter success trends have an ever so slight increase over the years, typically ranging from 5-15 percent.



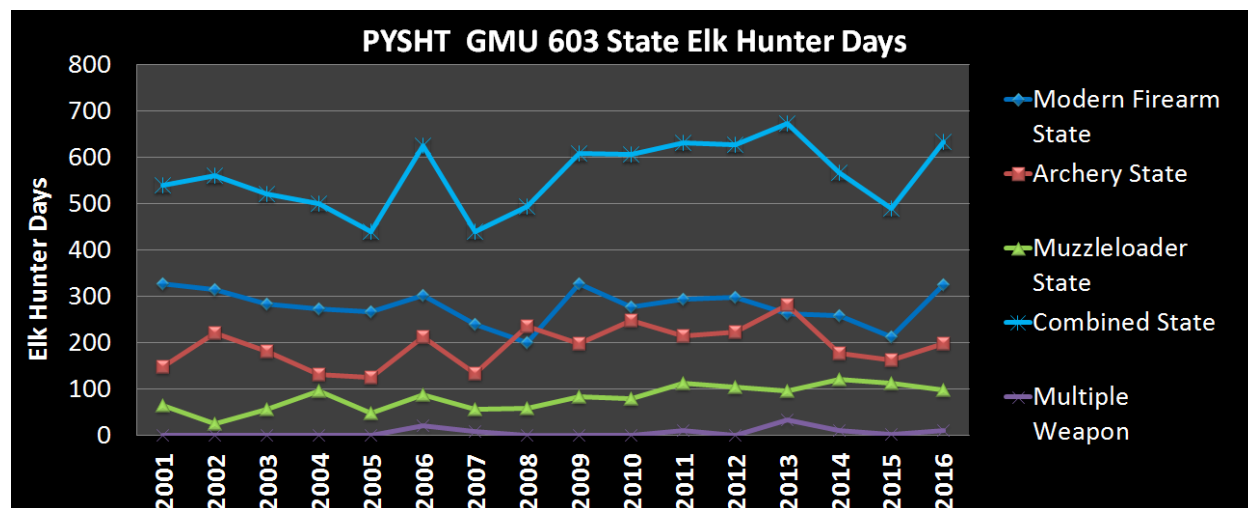
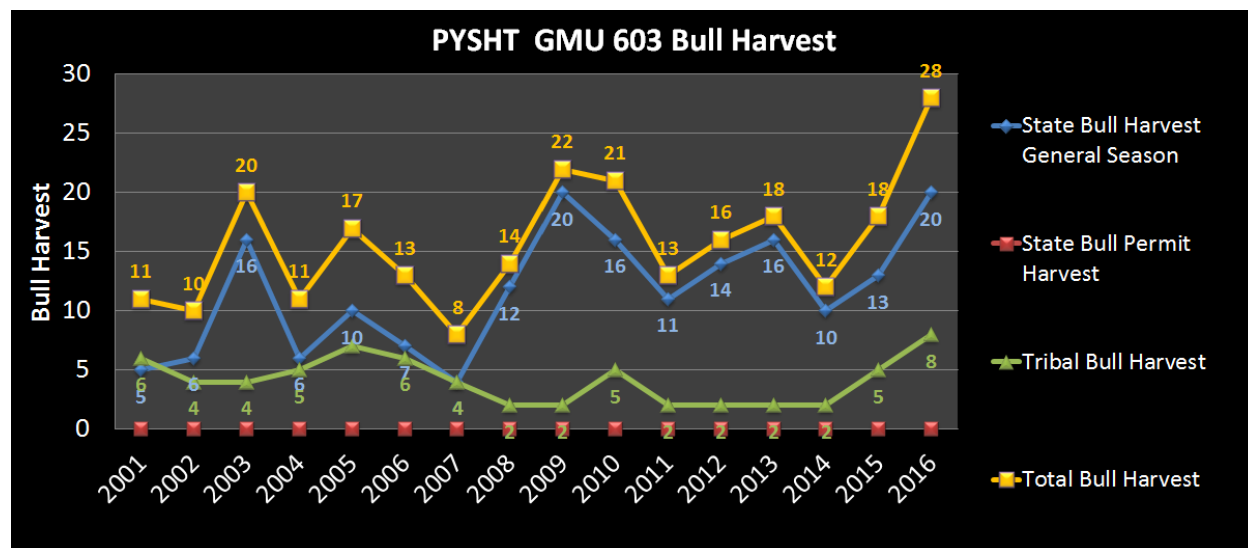


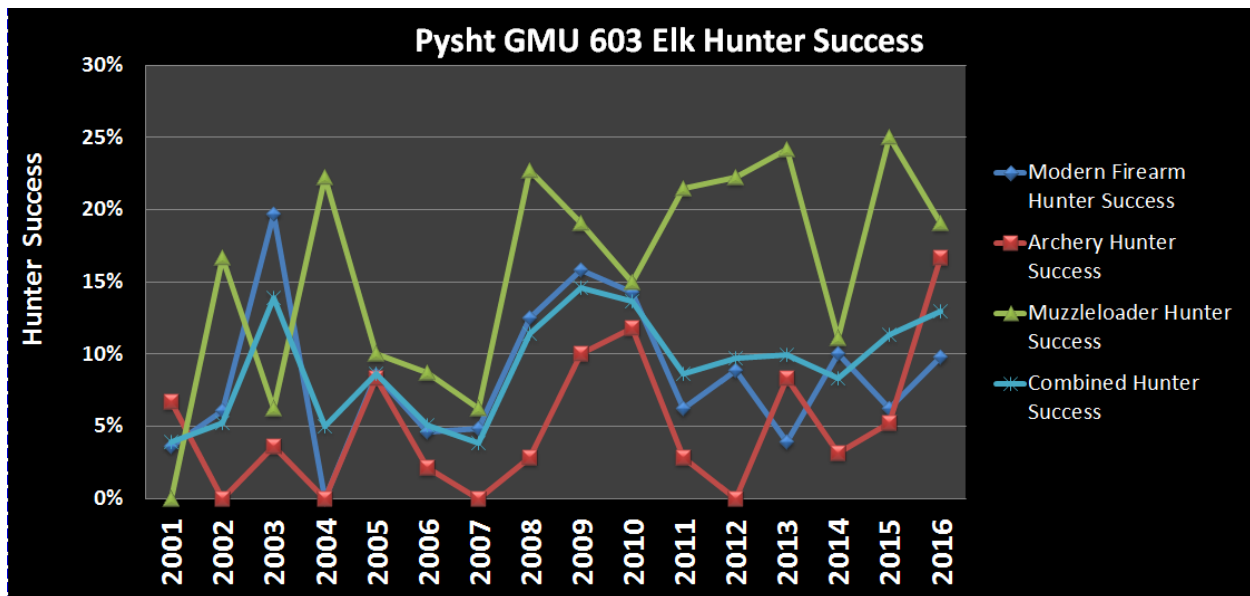
GMU 603 (Pysht) Elk Hunting

Abundance of elk in the Pysht GMU 603 has been increasing in the last three decades. During the 1990s it was uncommon to observe elk in the Pysht GMU 603. Even during helicopter searches, few elk were counted. Elk monitoring and studies were accomplished by the Lower

Elwha Tribe during the last decade. As the elk population continues to increase, the hunting opportunities are expanding, with the harvest trend increasing since 2001. Most of the elk population increase is occurring within the western portion, on Merrill & Ring Company forestlands. There are also some herds within the Elwha Watershed, but there has been no noticeable shift of elk into the newly formed Elwha floodplains yet. The Joyce vicinity seems to be the least populated by elk in all of Pysht GMU 603.

Muzzleloader hunters enjoy the highest hunter success of state hunters in the Pysht GMU 603, with an increasing trend from 2001 to 2016 of about 10 percent to about 20 percent. Archery hunters' success is wide ranging from 0-17 percent. Modern firearm hunters maintain a success level between 5-15 percent most all of the time.



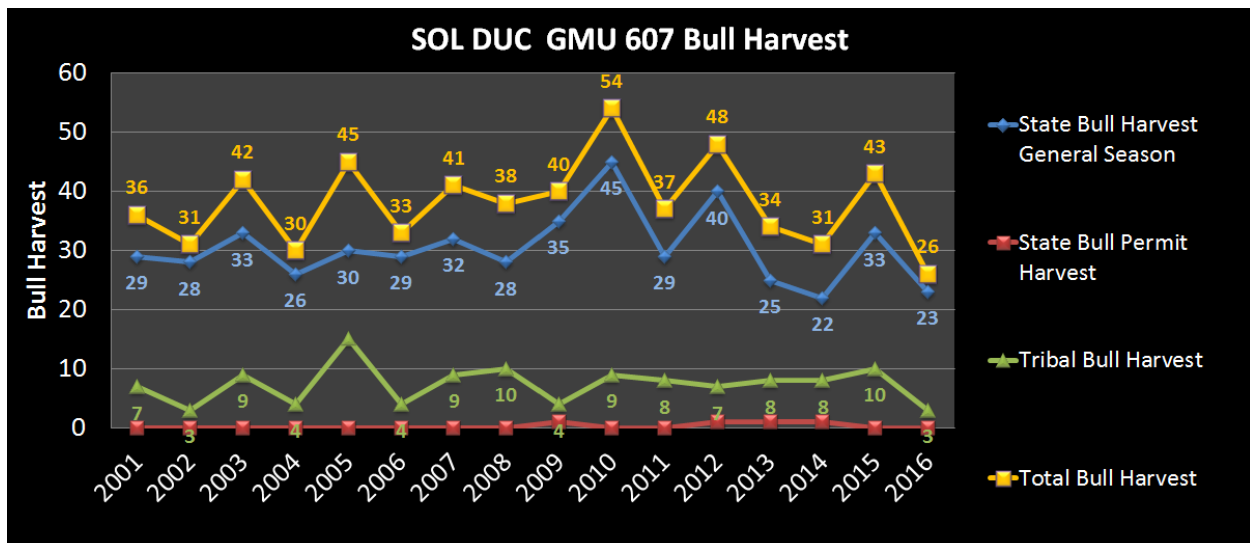


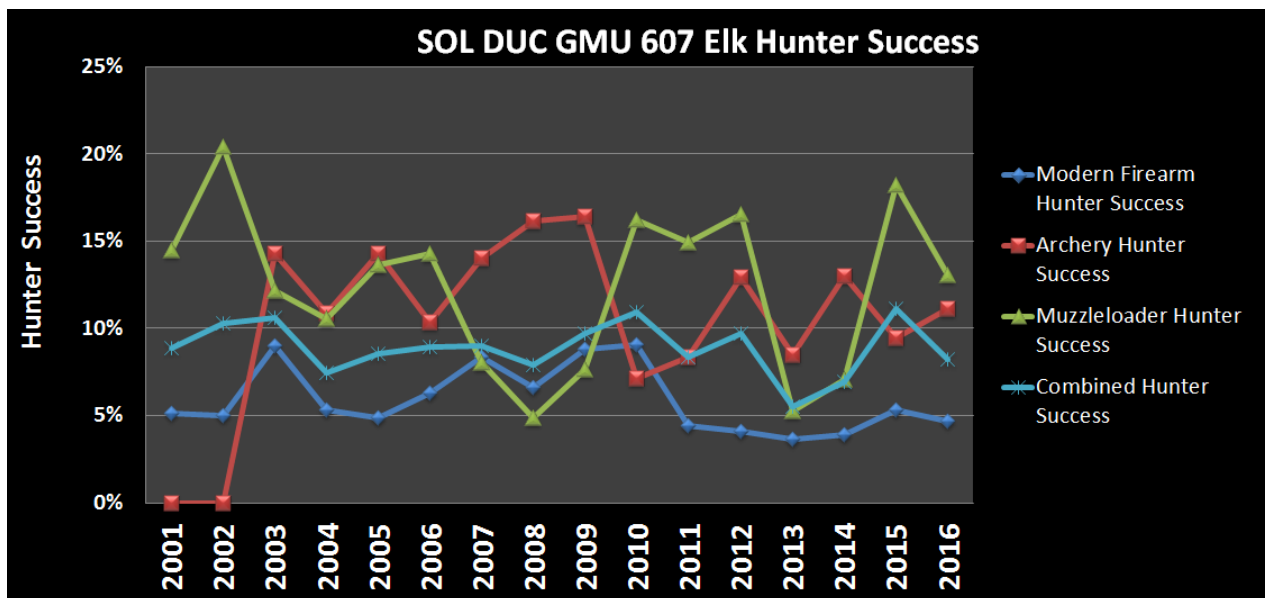
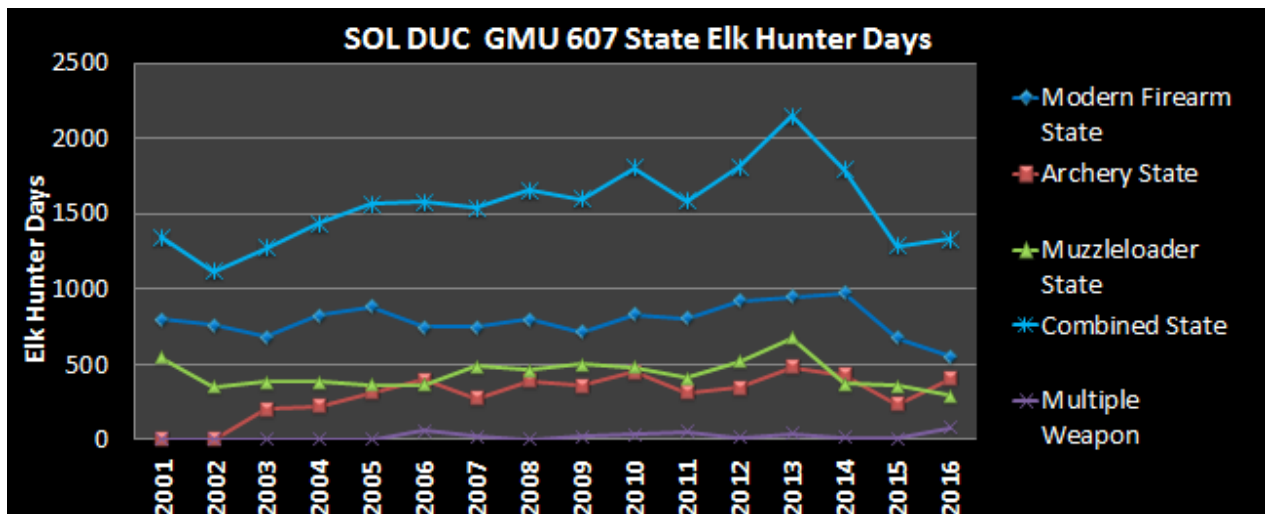
GMU 607 (Sol Duc) Elk Hunting

Over 70 percent of the elk harvest within the Sol Duc GMU 607 is by state hunters. The harvest has remained fairly consistent and steady since 2001, with a trend of state hunters taking about 30 bulls annually and tribal hunters taking about eight bulls annually.

Hunter Success in the Sol Duc GMU 607 is usually around 5-15 percent for all participating state hunters.

During 2015 and 2016 there was a decrease in Modern Firearm Hunter days compared to 2014 and prior; but interestingly enough the harvest for Modern Firearm Hunters did not show a comparable drop.





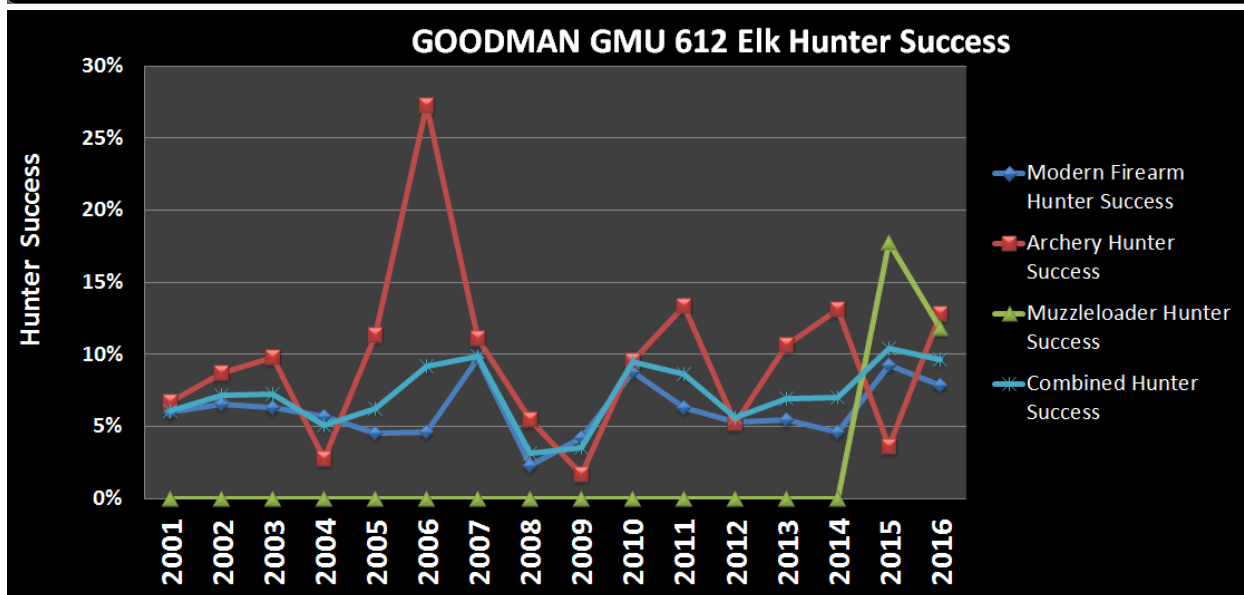
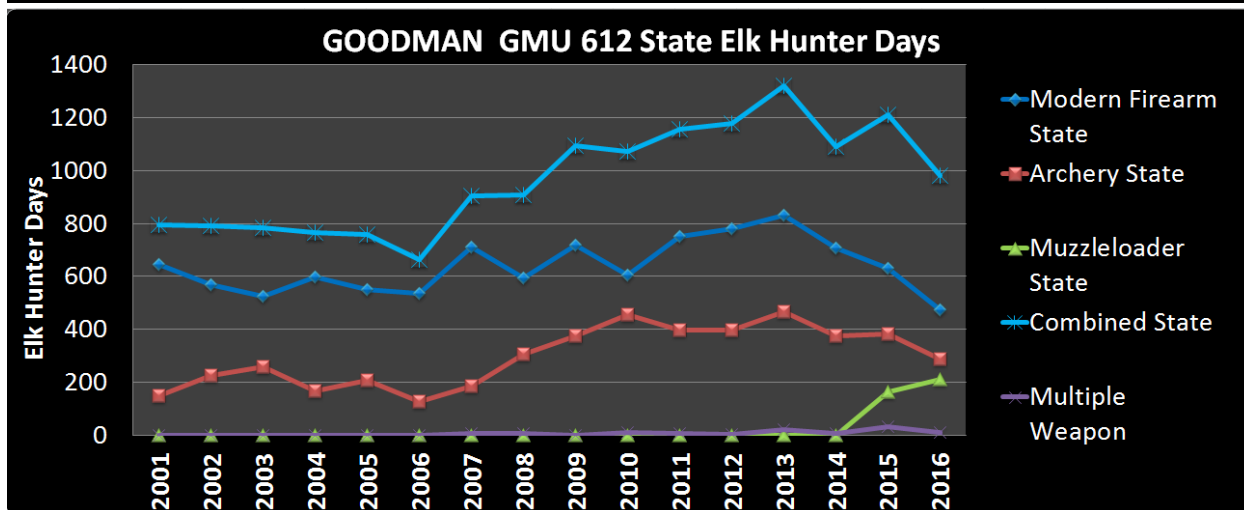
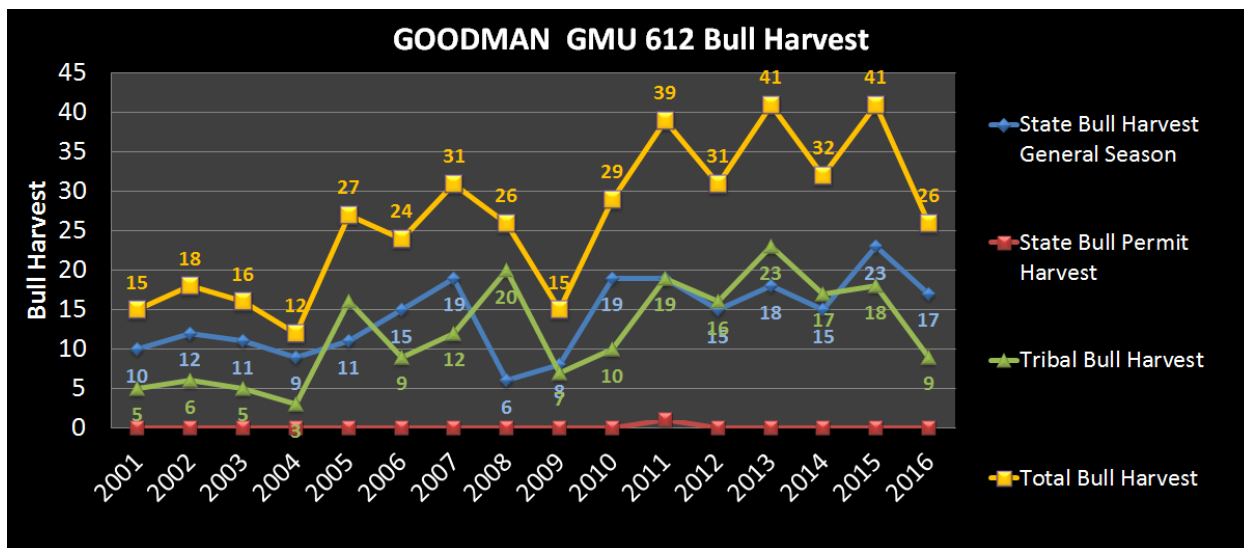


GMU 612 (Goodman) Elk Hunting

Total bull harvest in Goodman GMU 612 is almost 50 percent state hunter harvest and 50 percent tribal hunter harvest.

Muzzleloader season opened up for Goodman GMU 612 in 2015 and 2016, resulting in a very modest amount of muzzleloader hunter days, about 200 annually. The muzzleloader hunter success is starting at 10-17 percent, while the archery and modern firearm hunter success has been between 5-15 percent most all of the time.

The total number of state hunter days in the Goodman GMU 612 has remained fairly constant over the years, not being below 800 days since 2006, while in recent years it has hovered around 1000 to 1200.



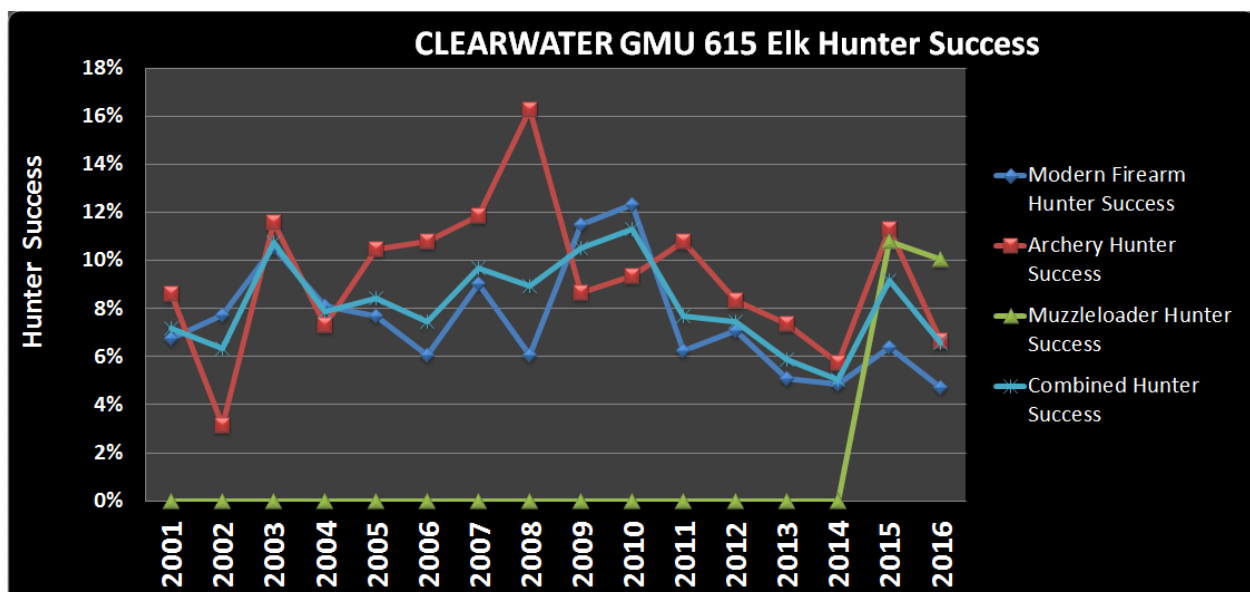
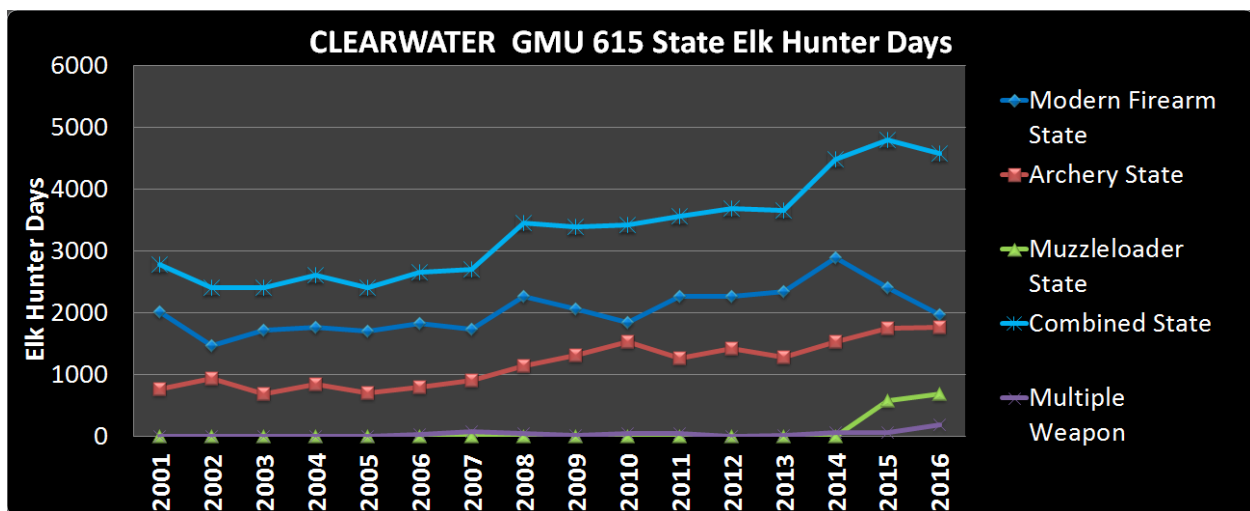
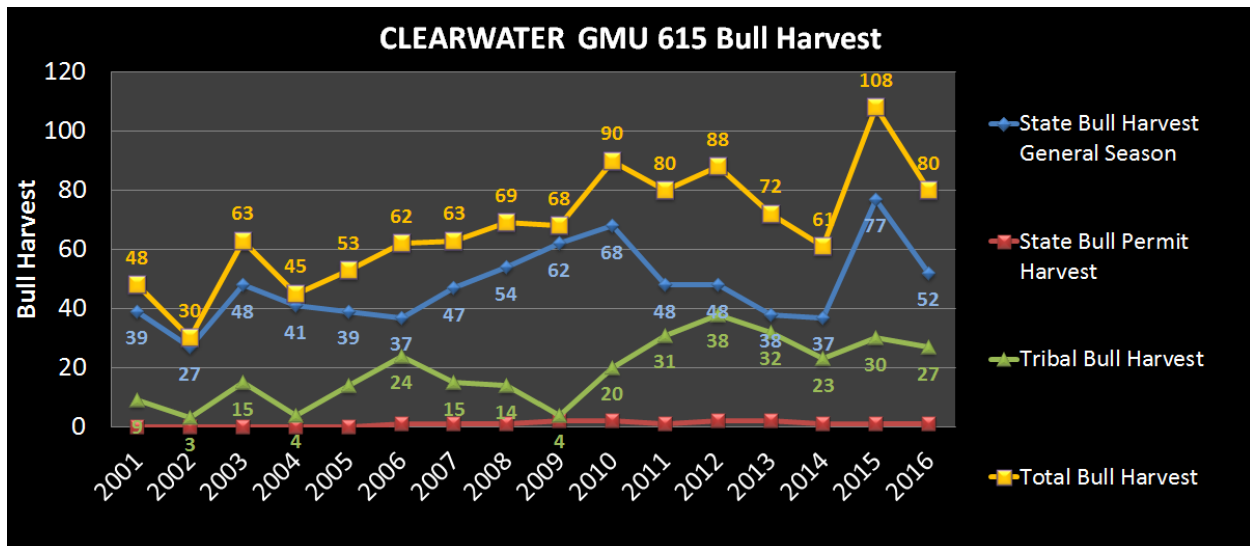


GMU 615 (Clearwater) Elk Hunting

Clearwater GMU 615 has always had the most elk harvest of all GMUs in District 16. The total elk bull harvest trend since 2001 has been increasing from mid 40s in 2001 to twice that in 2016 at 80-90.

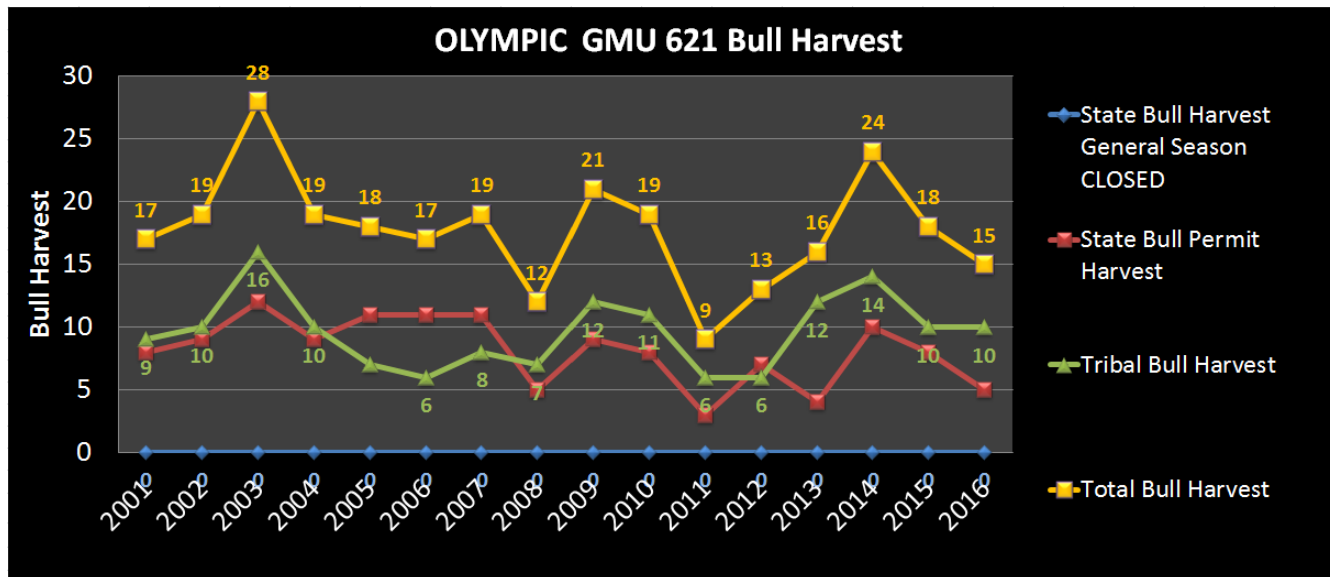
Hunter success for Clearwater GMU 615 falls within a narrow range for all state hunters, reliably between 4 and 12%, with only a couple outliers for archery hunters.

Muzzleloader season opened during 2015 and 2016, and there was participation both years. The overall total number of hunter days remained fairly constant, a result of increased muzzleloader hunter days and an almost equal decrease of modern firearm hunter days.



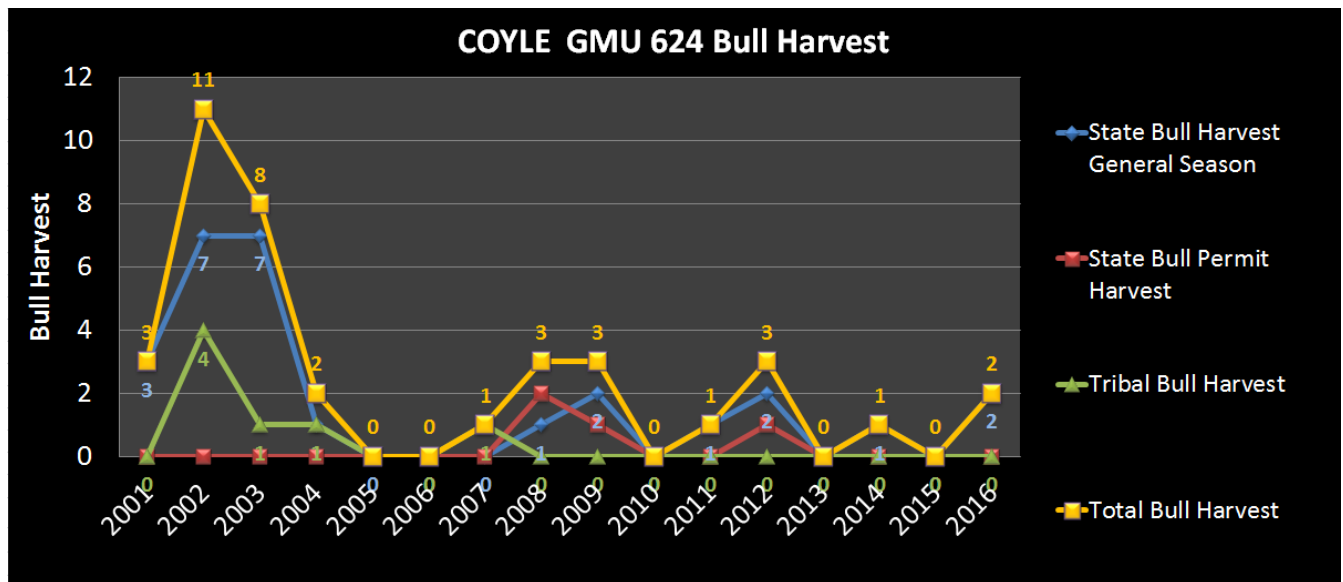
GMU 621 (Olympic) Elk Hunting

Overall the Olympic GMU 621 elk hunt opportunity is limited to permit hunts and an occasional damage hunt harvest. The permit hunts can be a great opportunity, as long as the weather and elk use patterns are favorable. Most of the hunting opportunity in Olympic GMU 621 is within District 15. Please review the Hunting Prospects for District 15.



GMU 624 (Coyle) Elk Hunting

The Coyle GMU 624 is not a prime elk hunting GMU. The source of the Coyle GMU 624 elk harvest is likely from small groups of elk that may have split off from the Dungeness herd or other east Olympic Peninsula elk herds. Over the years there have been reports of small groups of elk in various locations within the Coyle GMU 624, mostly within District 15. See District 15's [Hunting Prospects](#). Much of the ownership where these reports have been from are private acreages, typically small farms. Making arrangements for hunting in much of this area is difficult. When WDFW was tasked to consider closing the GMU to elk hunting it was decided that the hunting season would be retained, which can help be used as a tool to resolve some damage control. If elk abundance increases in this GMU, the opportunity to harvest elk should increase as well.



NOTABLE HUNTING CHANGES

New baiting regulations for deer and elk have been adopted. See page 84 of the 2017 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations pamphlet at <http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/regulations/>.

BACTERIAL HOOF DISEASE

Over the past decade, WDFW has received a growing number of reports of elk exhibiting hoof deformities in southwest Washington. This is a major concern for hunters, area residents, and state wildlife managers alike. Reports have been increasing in number and geographic scope, and hunters are regularly seeing and sometimes harvesting an elk with this condition. It has been noted in both males and females, old and very young animals, and in any hoof.

Through collaborative work with five independent diagnostic laboratories and epidemiological specialists within the USA and abroad, hooves from affected elk have been extensively examined and results have been reviewed by a 16-member technical panel of researchers and veterinarians. All evidence to date indicates that elk hoof disease is caused by treponeme infectious bacteria and appears to be very similar to a disease complex known as digital dermatitis (DD), the most prevalent infectious hoof disease of cattle, and, in some parts of the world, sheep and goats. Although many bacteria play a role in hoof disease, a type of spirochete belonging to the genus *Treponema* is the most common.

Treponeme-associated hoof disease (TAHD) in elk most closely resembles contagious ovine digital dermatitis (CODD) in sheep. Infection in elk hooves results in abnormal hoof growth, cavitating sole ulcers, and in severe cases, eventual sloughing of the hoof capsule. There is no evidence that the bacteria are harmful to humans, and tests have shown that the disease does not affect animals' meat or organs.

Microscopic examination of tissues, including meat, from elk affected by hoof disease has not revealed evidence of infection, inflammation, or any other indication that the meat is unsuitable for human consumption. In all animals inspected to date, the disease has been limited to the hooves, and the meat has been normal. Domestic animals severely affected by hoof disease are commonly slaughtered, and hoof disease in domestic animals does not cause federal meat inspectors to condemn the meat as unsuitable for human food. If the meat looks and smells normal, and if common sense and good hygiene are practiced during the harvesting, processing, and cooking, the meat is most likely safe to eat. For more information, please see the department's website at [Wild Game Meat Food Safety](#).

The primary area of TAHD infection is in the Cowlitz River Basin. However, suspected incidences of hoof disease occur in southwest Washington in ten counties. Scientists believe environmental factors are important in disease initiation, and the bacteria likely persist in wet soils and are spread to new locations on the hooves of infected animals.

Hunters should be aware to minimize the spread of the disease. The Department has implemented new regulations requiring hunters to leave the hooves of any elk taken in the affected area on site. See page 64 of the 2017 Big Game Hunting pamphlet for details on the regulation regarding leaving elk feet at the site of harvest in southwest Washington.

Wildlife managers currently do not know the prevalence of the disease, or its adverse effects on the population, and there is not a treatment or vaccine available at this time. WDFW continues to work towards a better understanding of the hoof disease situation for both the infected animals specifically and the elk population as a whole. Recent undertakings include efforts to determine the distribution and prevalence of the disease across the landscape and a WDFW research project to understand the possible effects of TAHD on elk survival and reproduction. If hunters harvest an elk with a collar, please call the phone number on the collar as soon as possible so it can be retrieved. Much more information can be found on page 64 in the pamphlet and on the department's [webpage](#). Hunters can help WDFW address this challenging wildlife management issue by reporting elk with hoof disease on the [online reporting tool](#).

DEER

GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

Black-tailed deer monitoring is continuing to be accomplished by tracking the harvest and hunting effort and gathering data on survivability, recruitment and mortality rates using studies of collared deer and aerial census methods.

District 16 Wildlife Biologists are actively involved in black-tailed deer research. Assignments conducted by district staff for this research includes collaring and tracking of the deer, and locating collared deer mortalities to identify mortality causes. These links represent some of the collaring in Clallam County:

Link: [Researcher Cliff Rice releasing collared doe.](#)

Link: [Black-tailed Deer- Western Washington Study using GPS collars.](#)

The deer captures in District 16 were indicative of the prevalence of deer here. During the capture portion of the study, the detectability of deer was noticeably much higher east of the Elwha. According to Dr. Cliff Rice, the lead researcher, some of the largest does captured in western Washington were captured west of the Dungeness on the lower foothills in a mix of DNR and private land.

WHICH GMU SHOULD DEER HUNTERS HUNT?

Western District 16

Western District 16 is generally sparse of deer. This area includes GMUs 601 (Hoko), 602 (Dickey), 603 (Pysht), 607 (Sol Duc), 612 (Goodman) and 615 (Clearwater). Observations and published reports indicate that deer population numbers and density are generally low throughout the District west of the Elwha. Following is a link to some recent research in the Hoko GMU: [Black-tailed Deer Research in Hoko GMU](#). Olympic Peninsula deer study results prompted two west Olympic Peninsula tribes to drop antlerless harvest in western GMUs in 2010.

Eastern District 16

Eastern District 16 includes the northwestern portion of GMU 621 (Olympic) and the northern portion of GMU 624 (Coyle) which extend east and south into District 15 (eastern Jefferson County). Because the data on harvest is recorded by GMU, the harvest figures presented here include all of GMU 621 and 624, extending into District 15. The portion of District 16 east of the Elwha River has black-tailed deer populations that are readily observed (presumably due to higher densities) and in many areas can often be observed in groups, especially at low to mid-elevations. In these areas the deer are often considered to be a nuisance by property owners and agricultural operations, especially in the Coyle, GMU 624. Read more about Deer Area 6020 in [Deer Areas](#) section.

The Coyle GMU 624 does have firearm restrictions, with no centerfire or rimfire rifles allowed. Read more about that in the [Firearm Restrictions](#) section.

The mid and lower elevations of Olympic GMU 621 have high densities of deer as well, with some scattered blocks of DNR ownership that offer hunting on public land. Private industrial timber lands and property managed by the DNR are largely gated due to timber theft, dumping, vandalism, and other problems. However, many of these roads can be accessed on foot or with mountain bikes, giving those willing to do the work, access to deer that don't get as much hunting pressure. Be sure to check with the appropriate land owner/manager and obey all posted rules and regulations.

The key to a successful harvest is securing the appropriate permission to hunt on private land and scouting the area prior to the hunting season. Hunters who intend to target deer in developed areas would be well advised to check with local jurisdictions regarding firearm restrictions.

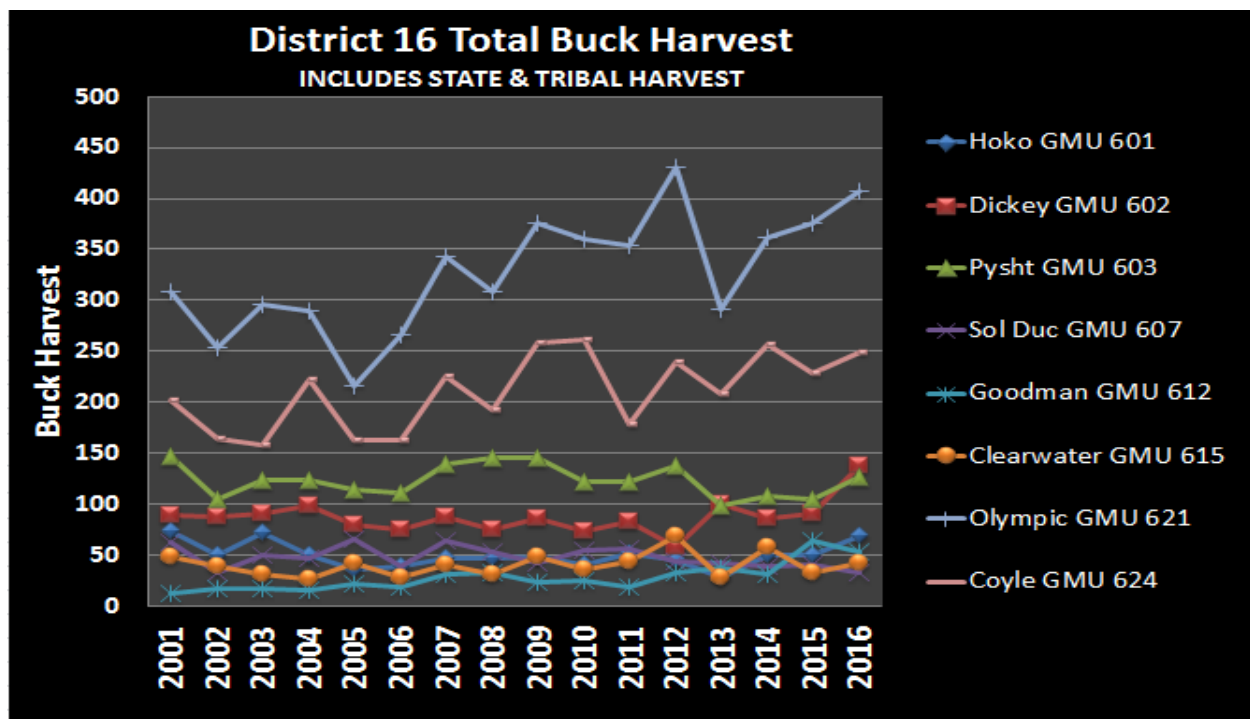
DISTRICT 16 BLACK-TAILED DEER HUNTING AND HARVEST RECORDS

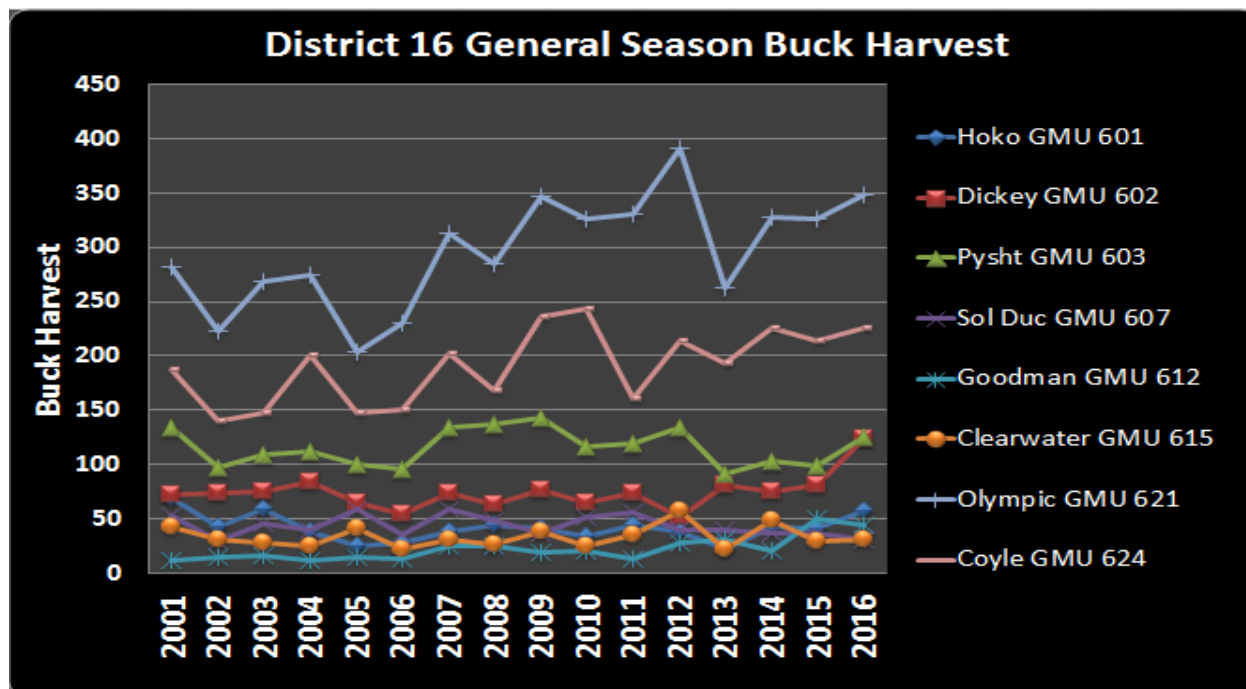
[Annual harvest reports](#) and harvest statistics for deer based on hunter reporting can be found on the WDFW website.

See District 15 Hunting Prospects for more information on GMU 621-Olympic and GMU 624-Coyle.

Buck harvest within District 16 GMUs is highest on the eastern half and lower as one goes further west. The four GMUs with the lowest buck harvest are Clearwater, Goodman, Dickey and Hoko, the most western GMUs in the District. Tribal harvest was 5-20 percent of the total deer harvest in District 16 GMUs.

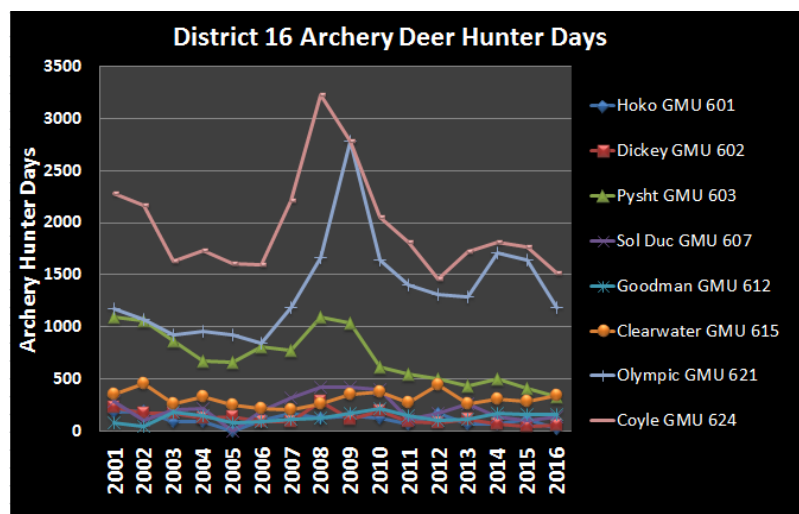
Buck Harvest





Archery Deer Hunting

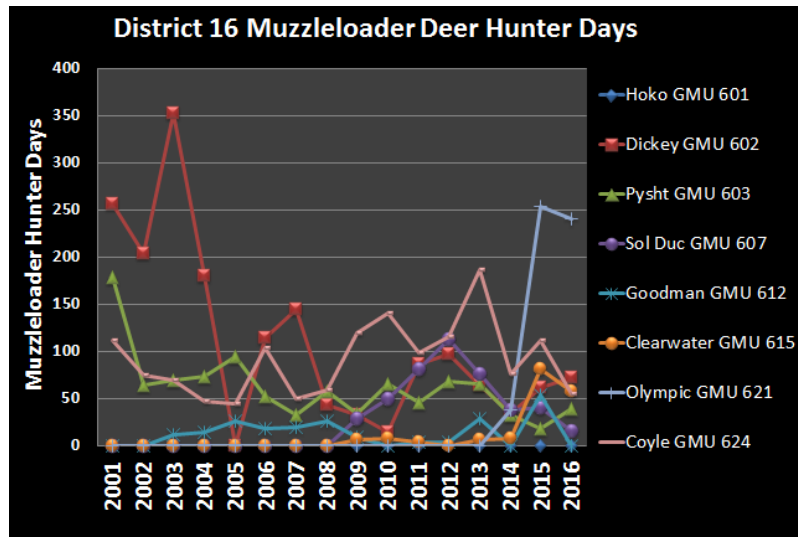
Archery hunting in District 16 is concentrated in the Olympic GMU 621 and Coyle GMU 624 (GMUs 621 and 624 are in both District 15 and 16). The Pysht GMU 603 has had moderate participation by archery hunters prior to 2010, but in recent years it has dropped, comparable now to the Clearwater GMU 615 archery hunter days.



Muzzleloader Deer Hunting

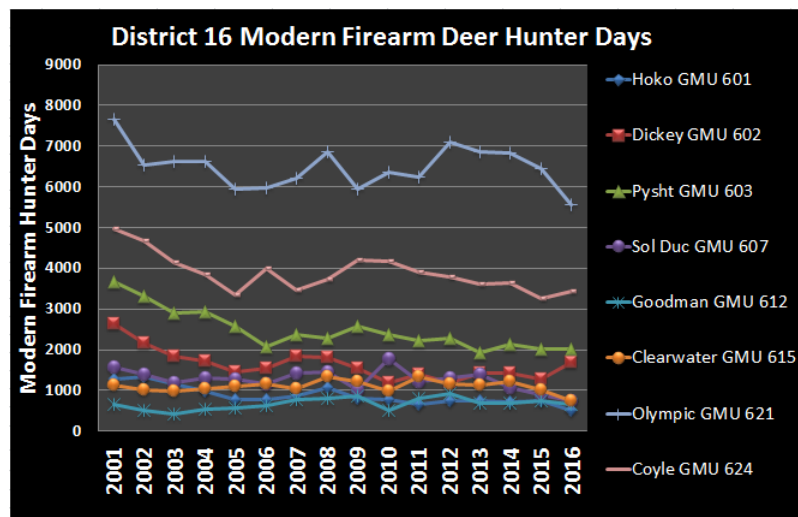
Muzzleloader deer hunting has recently increased in the Olympic GMU 621, while all of the other GMUs in District 16 reportedly receive less than 100 hunter days annually. The Coyle GMU 624 and Dickey GMU 602 have had much higher levels of muzzleloader hunter days in

previous years, but recently they have dropped down to below 100 days annually as well.



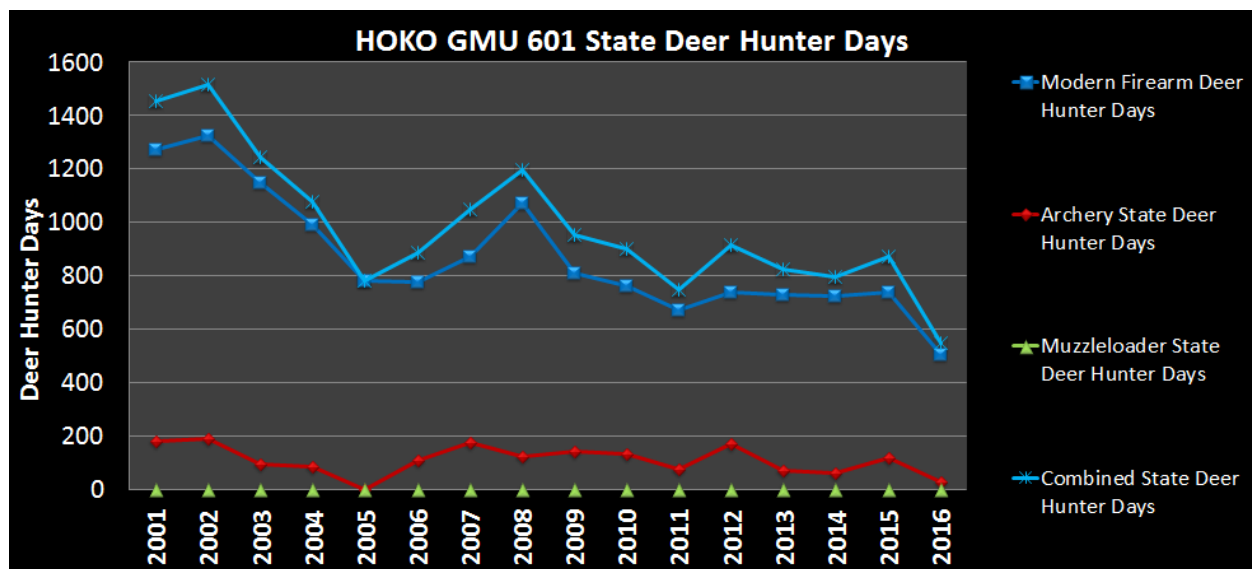
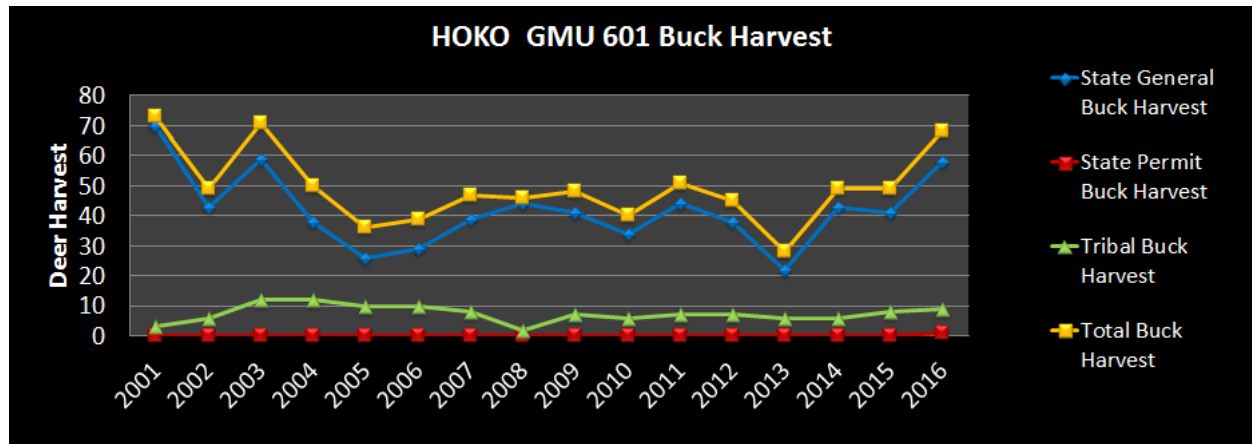
Modern Firearm Deer Hunting

Modern Firearm hunters have maintained a steady participation level in the GMUs in District 16. There is a slight downward trend in hunter days over the years for most all GMUs.

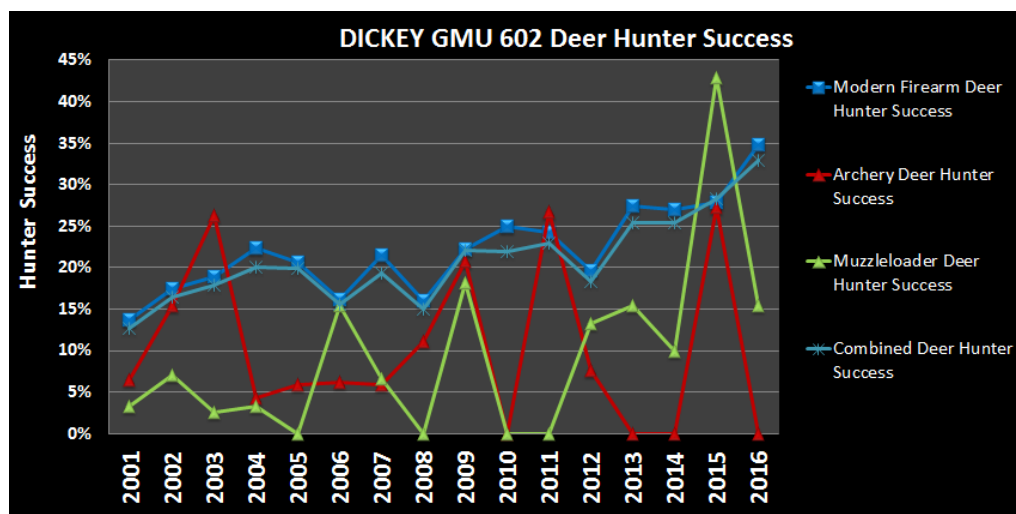
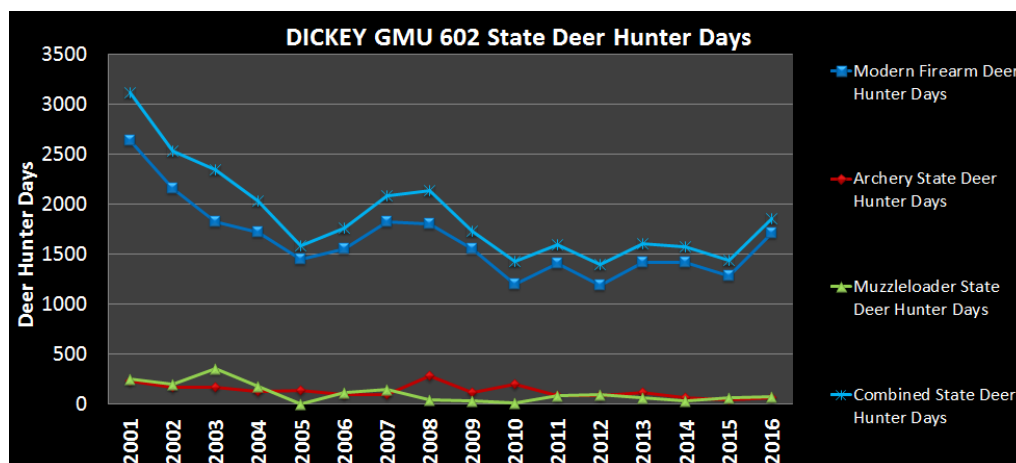
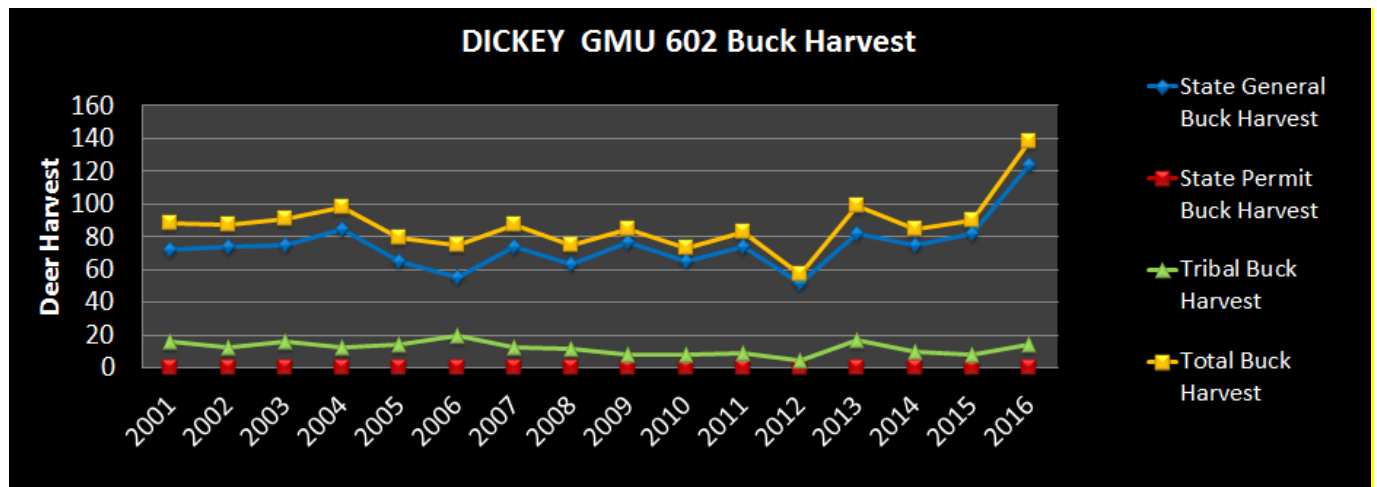


GMU 601 (Hoko) Deer Hunting

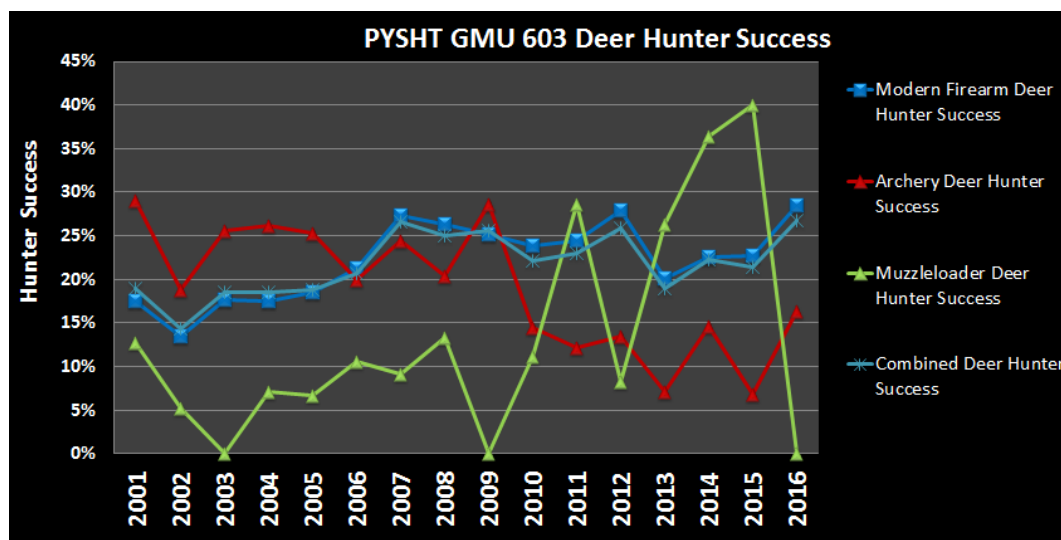
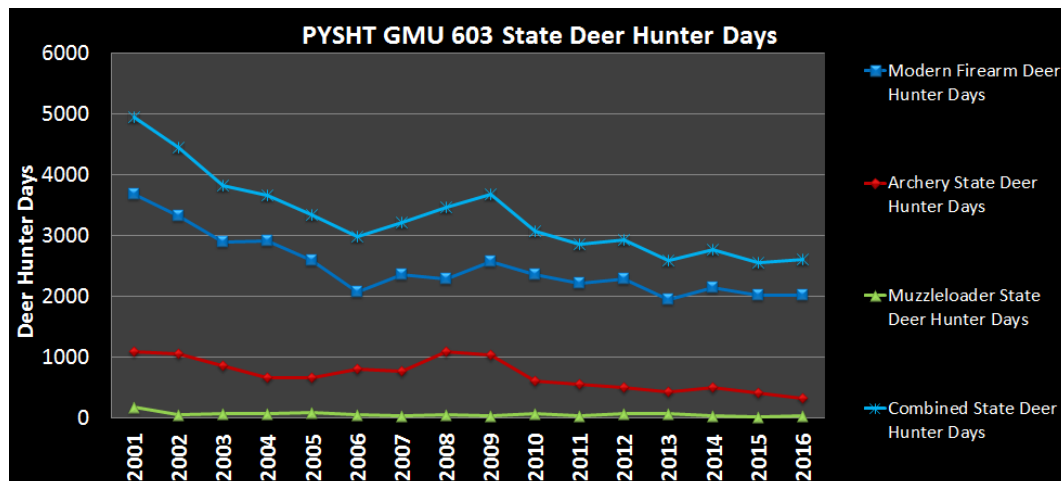
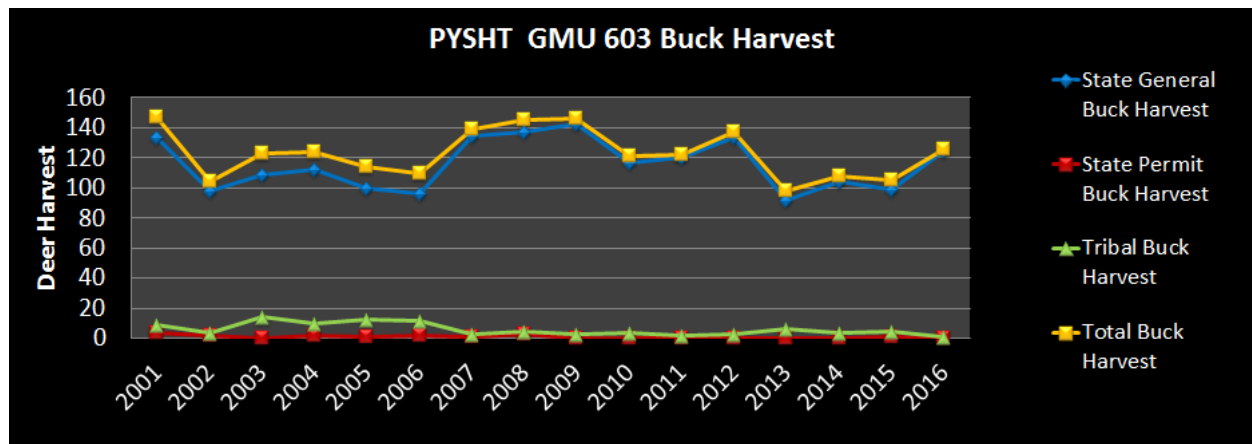
Hoko GMU 601 has primarily Modern Firearm hunting with a low level of archery hunting activity. The deer harvest in the Hoko is consistently low with not much likelihood of any changes there.



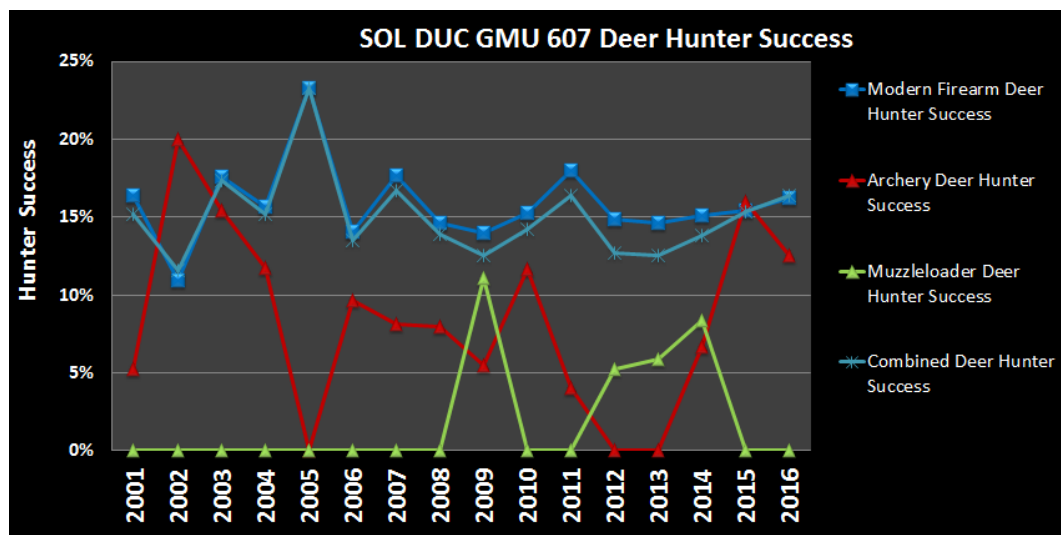
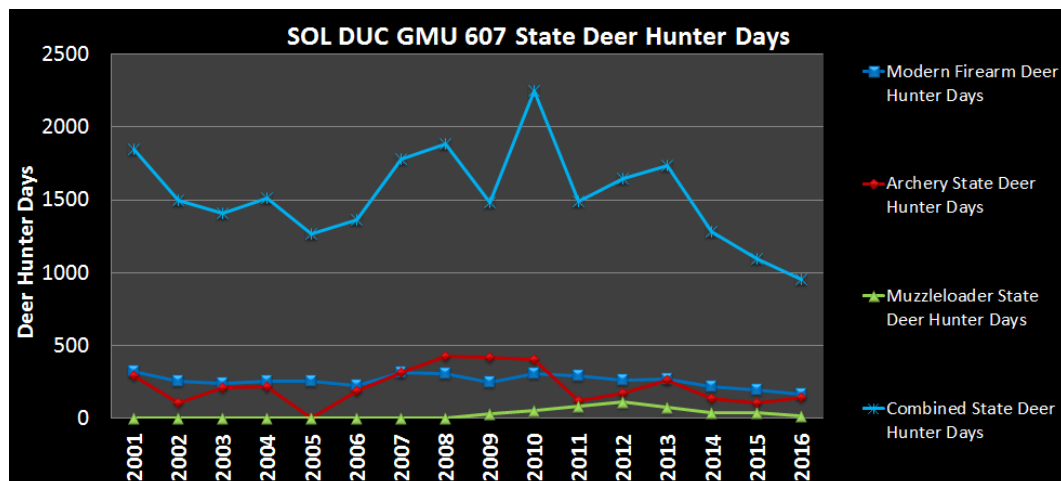
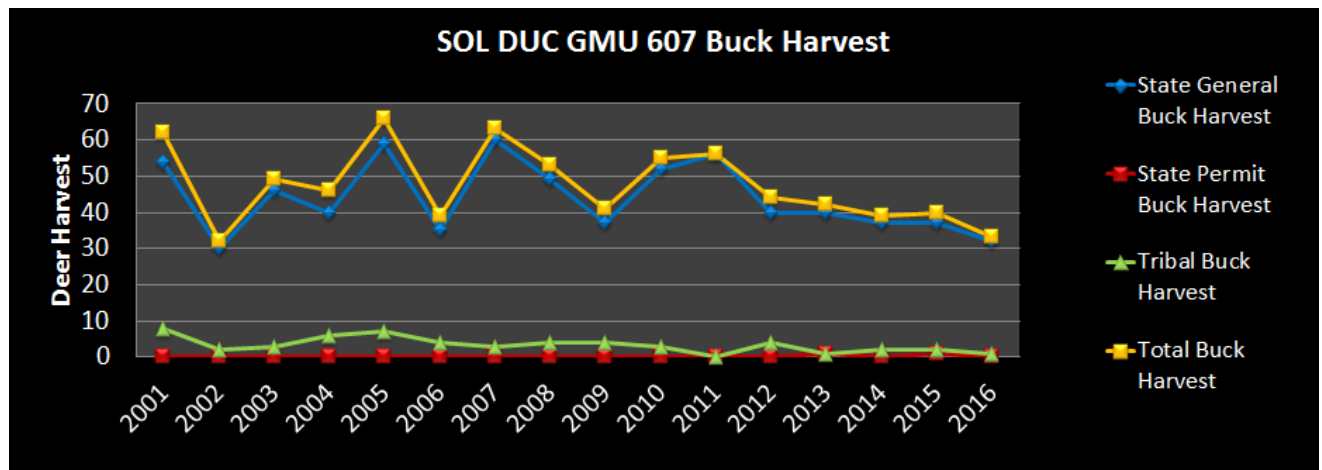
GMU 602 (Dickey) Deer Hunting



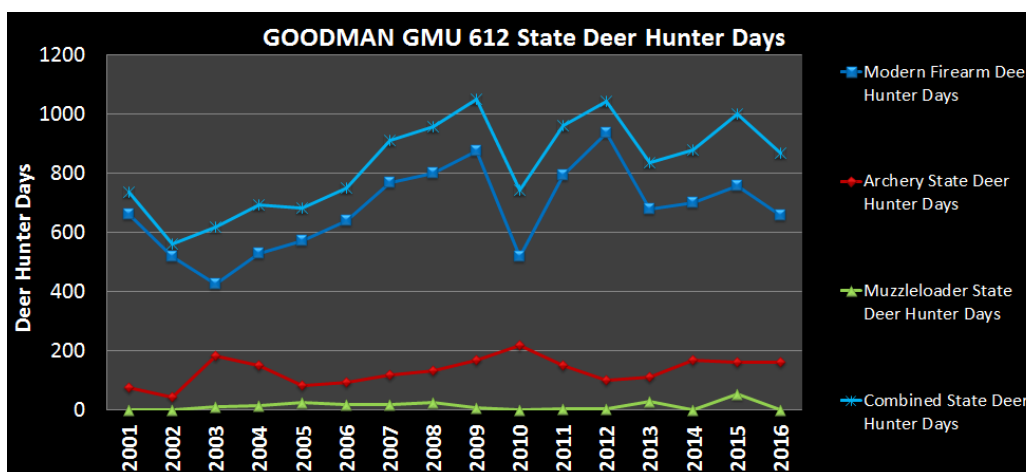
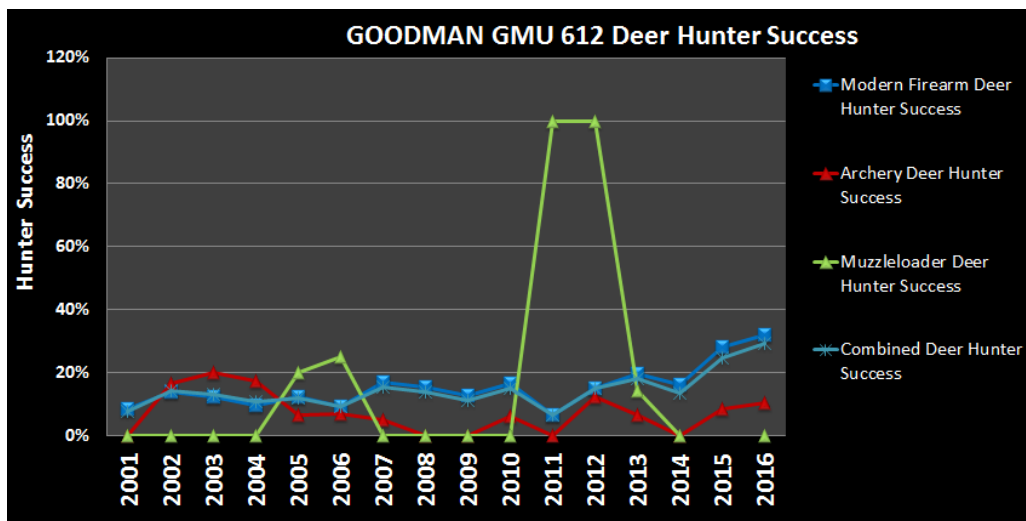
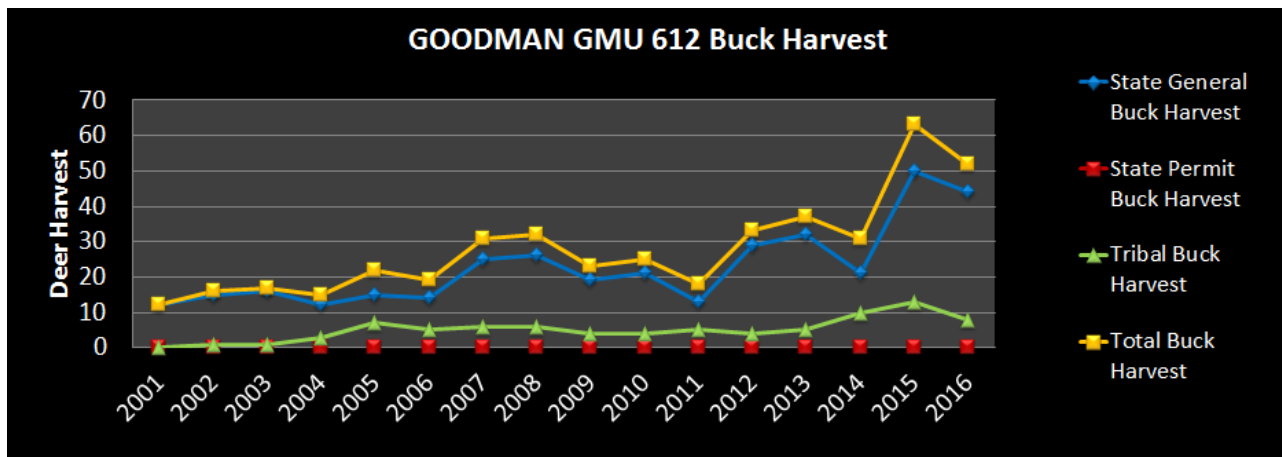
GMU 603 (Pysht) Deer Hunting



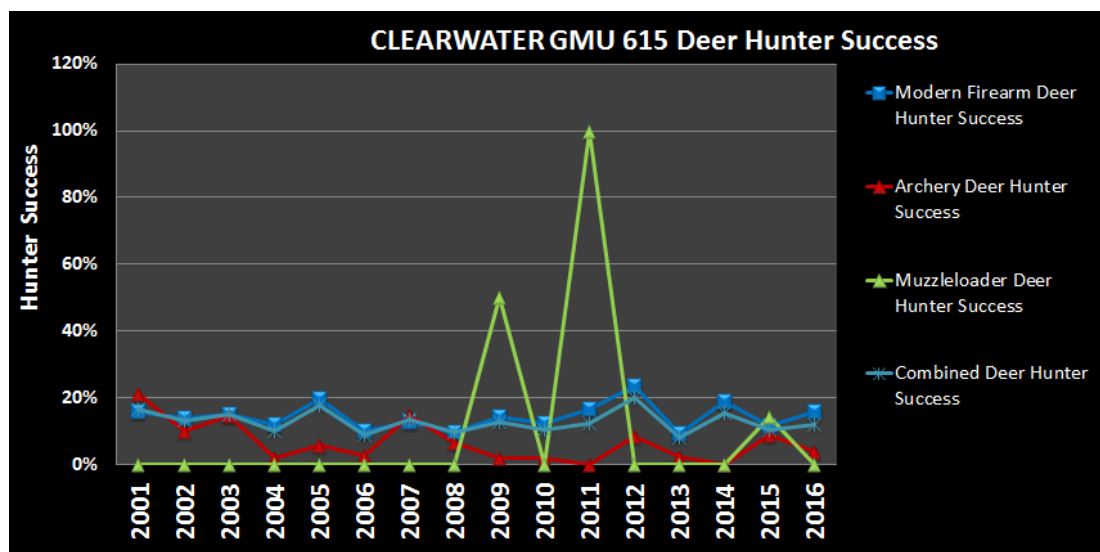
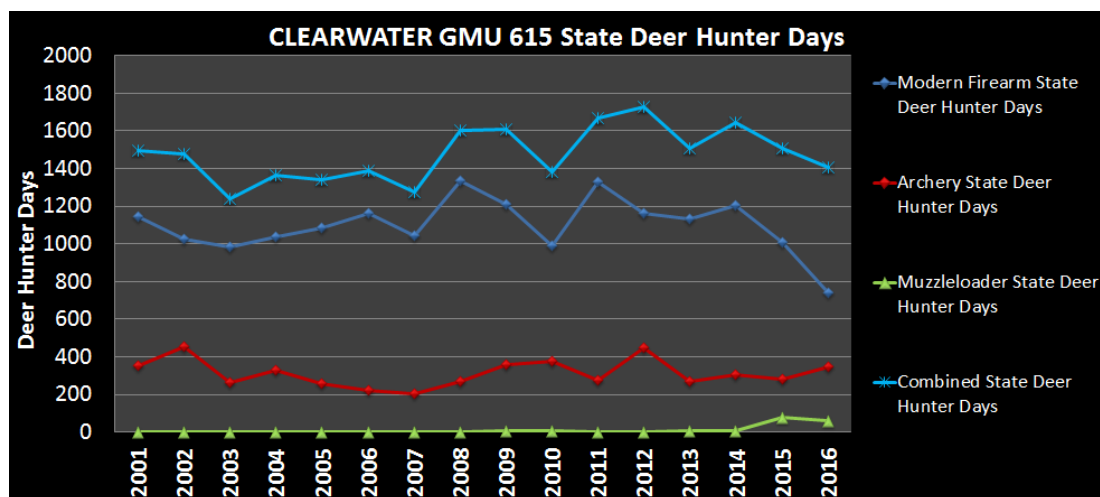
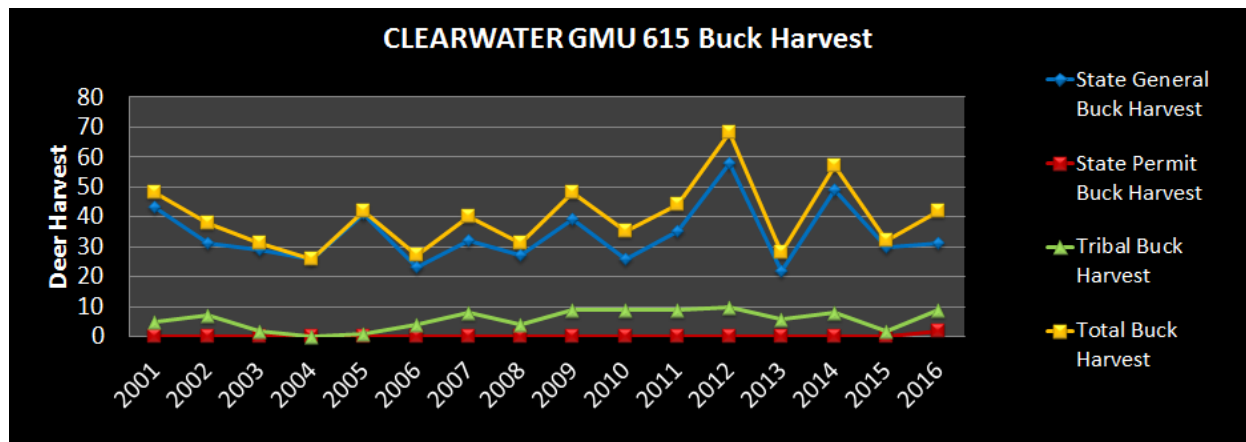
GMU 607 (Sol Duc) Deer Hunting



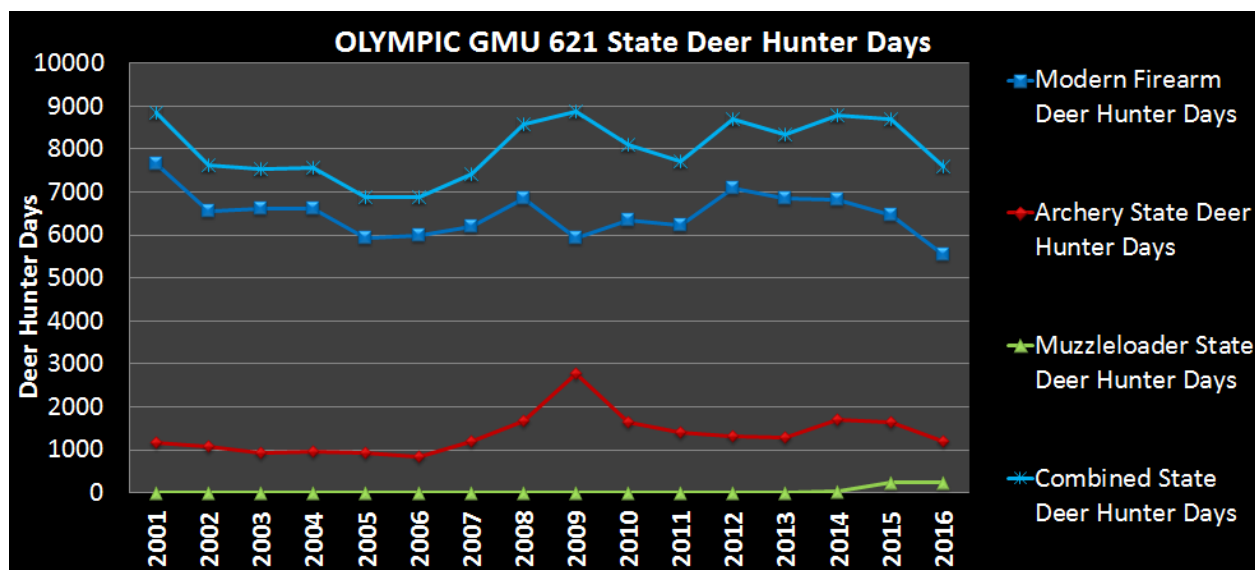
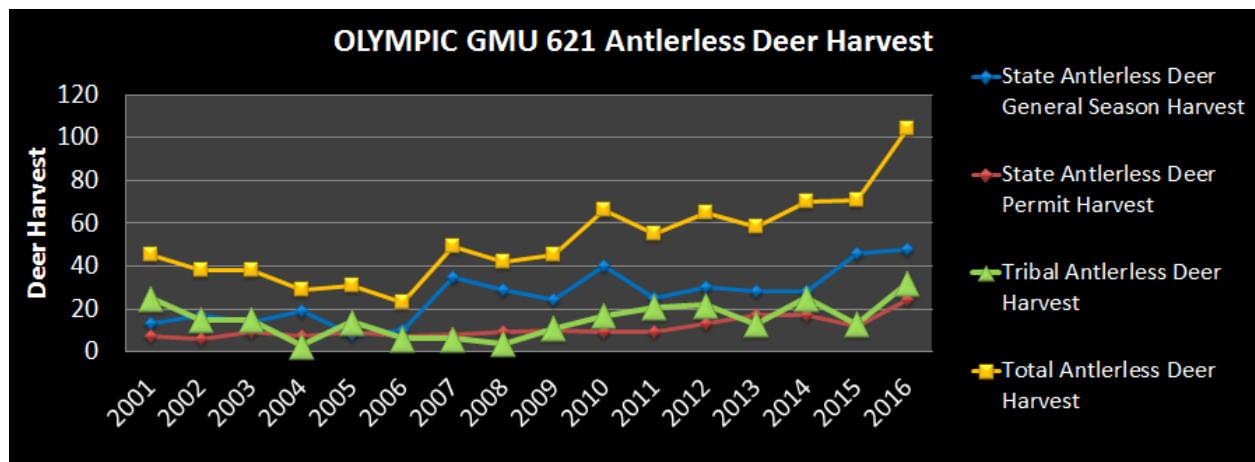
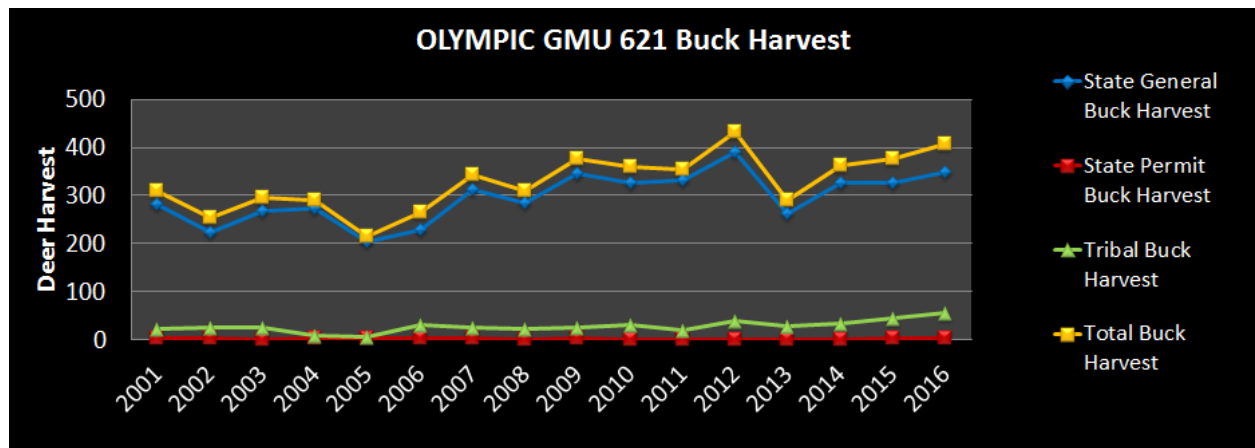
GMU 612 (Goodman) Deer Hunting

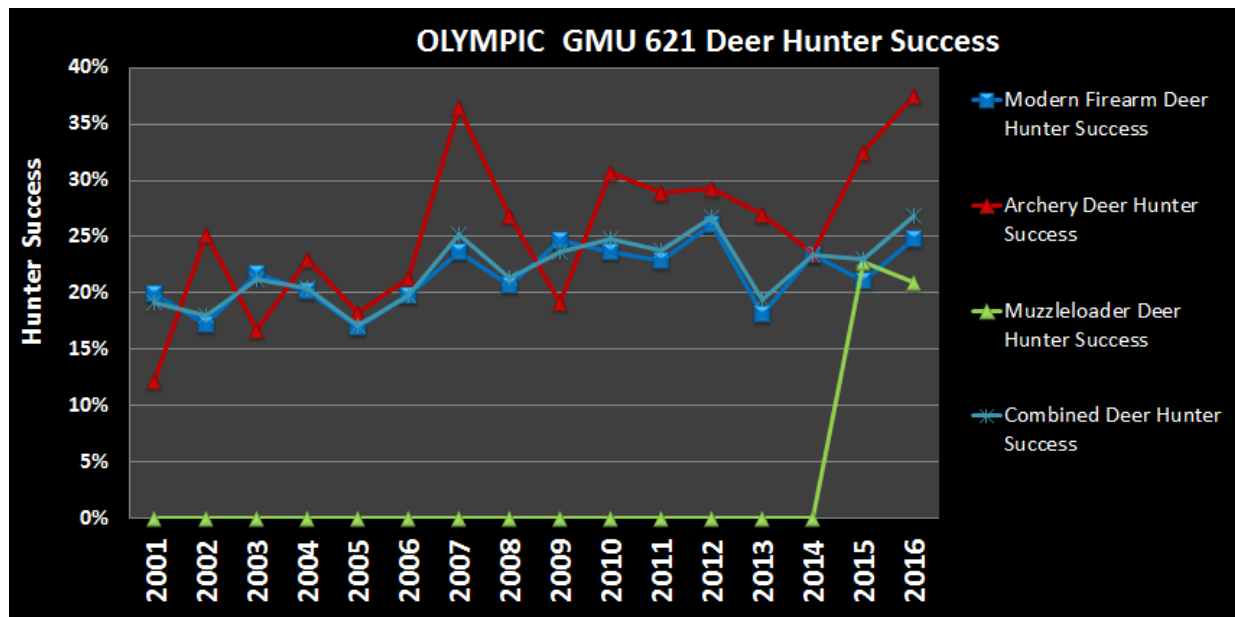


GMU 615 (Clearwater) Deer Hunting

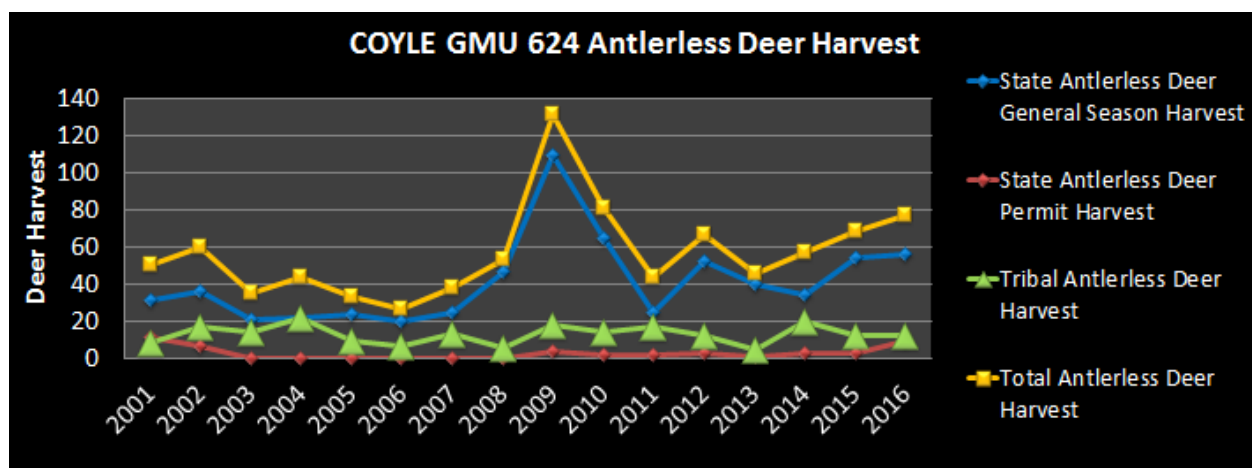
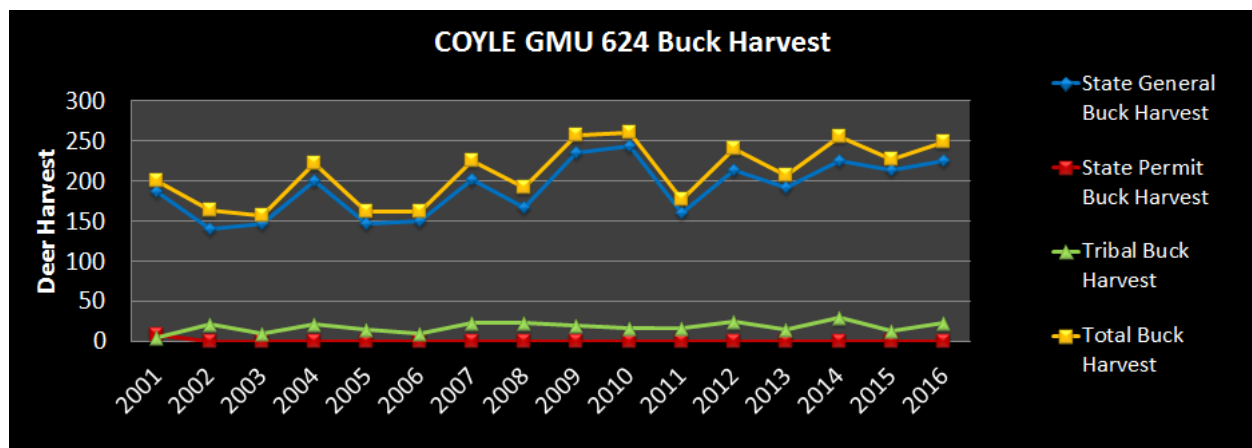


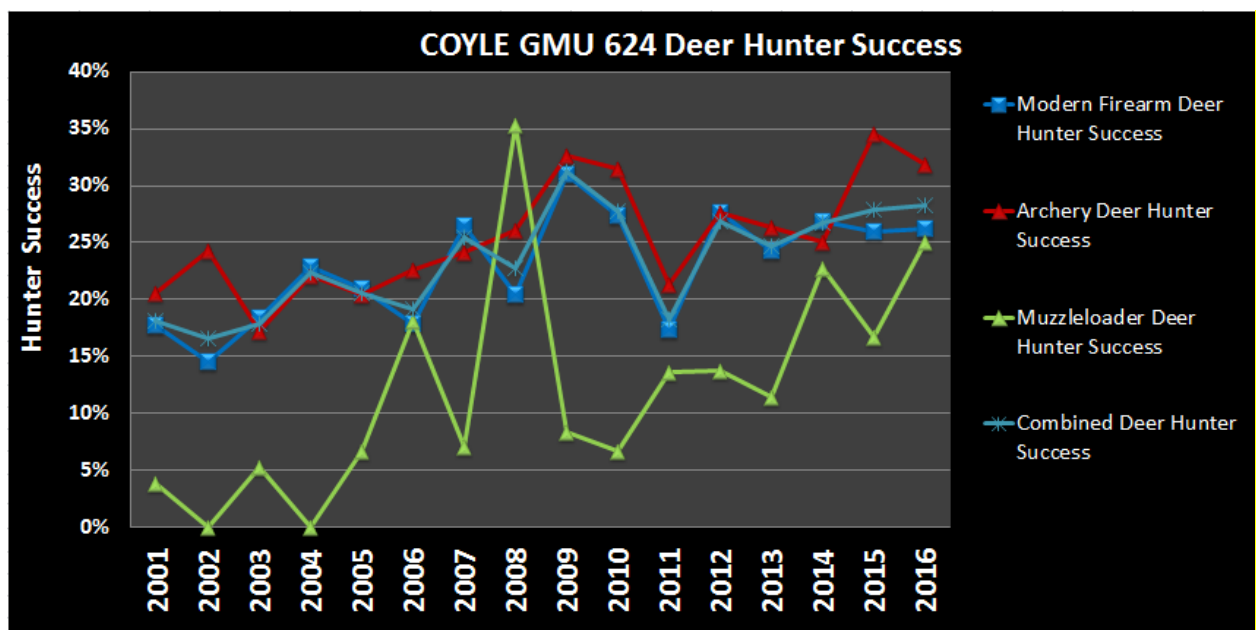
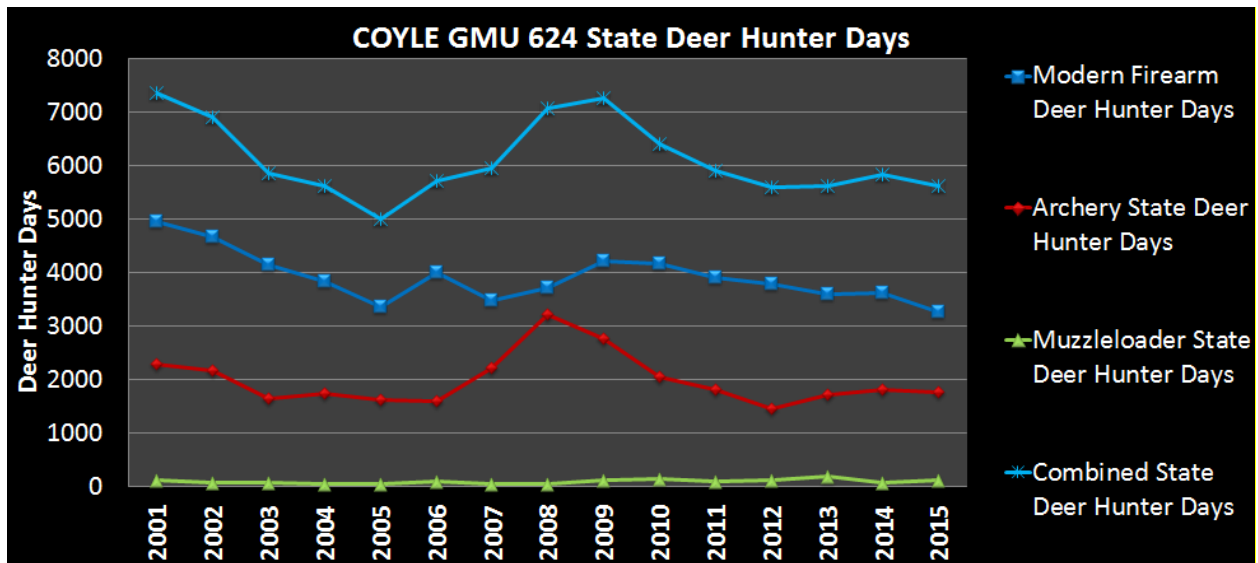
GMU 621 (Olympic) Deer Hunting





GMU 624 (Coyle) Deer Hunting





DEER AREAS

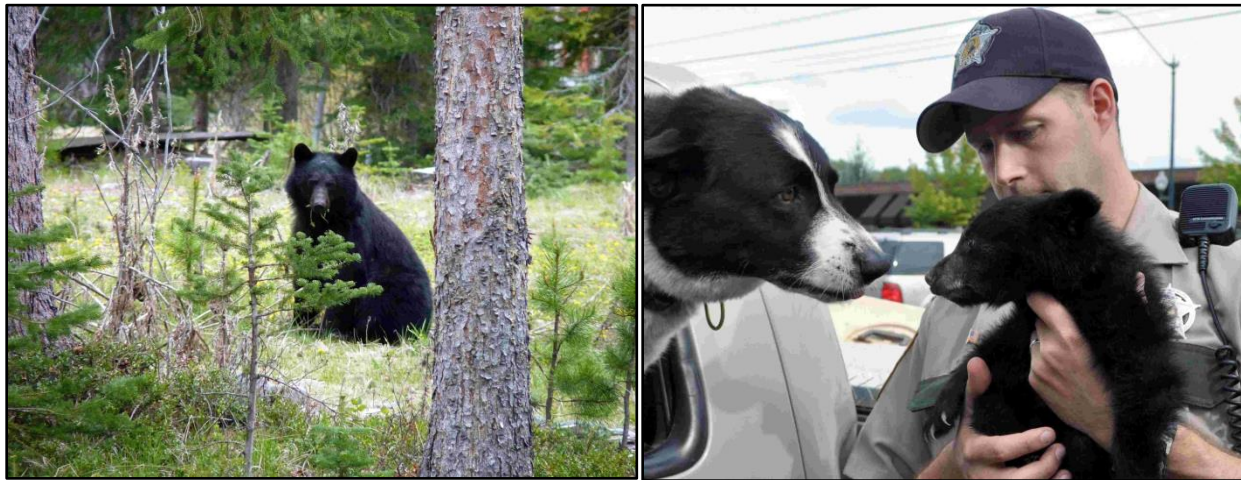
Deer Area 6020 was established years ago to allow harvest of does to help curb the trend of too many deer encompassing the area north of Highway 101 between Port Angeles and eastern Miller Peninsula. Doe harvest is allowed within Deer Area 6020 during the general seasons. This area is primarily private land, but it is worth inquiring with landowners about hunting access. Note that much of the state land on Miller Peninsula is state park, where hunting is not allowed. Refer to the Firearm Restrictions section of the Big Game pamphlet if you are considering this area. The entirety of GMU 624 has firearm restrictions regulations. No hunting of wildlife is allowed with centerfire or rimfire rifles.

NOTABLE HUNTING CHANGES

New baiting regulations for deer and elk have been adopted. See page 84 of the 2017 Big Game Hunting Seasons and Regulations pamphlet.

A large portion of the DNR land in GMU 615 has been included in a cooperative road closure agreement with WDFW for many years. Changes to the closure system are being considered, with some changes possible for 2017. For the most current information, contact the Washington DNR Forks office.

BEAR



GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

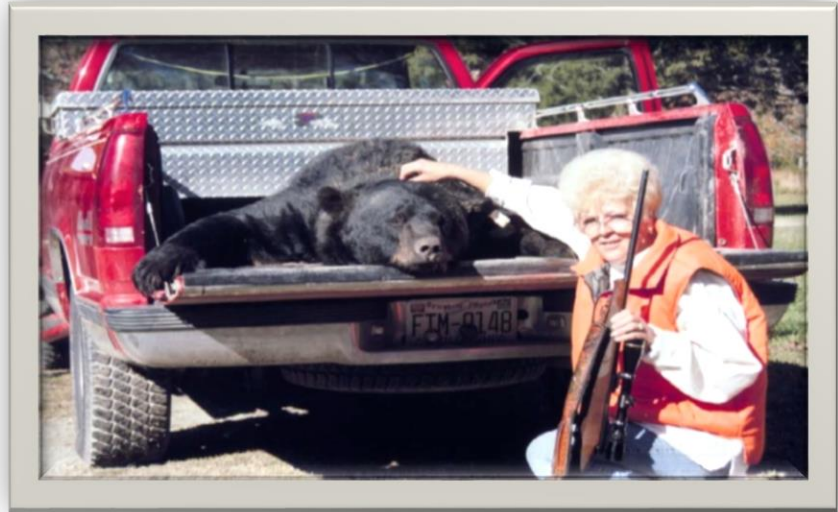
The goals for black bear management in Washington are to: 1) preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage black bear and their habitats to ensure healthy, productive populations; 2) minimize threats to public safety from black bears, while at the same time maintaining a sustainable and viable bear population; 3) manage black bear for a variety of recreational, educational, and aesthetic purposes, including hunting, scientific study, cultural and ceremonial uses by Native Americans, wildlife viewing, and photography; and 4) manage populations statewide for a sustained yield. For management purposes, the state is divided into nine Black Bear Management Units (BBMUs). Harvest levels vary between BBMU depending on local population dynamics and environmental conditions.

District 16 is located nearly entirely within the designated Coastal Black Bear Management Unit (BBMU). However, there is a small portion of GMU 624 within the Puget Sound BBMU. This area is mostly private land with firearm restrictions. There is no spring bear permit hunt season within the district. Fall black bear hunting is allowed in all GMUs within the district. The current black bear hunting season guidelines for both the Coastal BBMU and Puget Sound BBMU are designed to maintain black bear populations at their current level. The fall black bear hunting season for all District 16 units is August 1 to November 15, 2017. Hunters can purchase up to two bear tags during each license year. Three statistics used to assess black bear harvest are:

- Proportion of females harvested
- Median age of harvested females
- Median age of harvested males

WDFW does not conduct annual surveys to monitor trends in black bear population size. Trends in harvest data are used instead for population estimates or indices. Currently, black bear populations are believed to be stable in District 16. Black bears occur throughout District 16, but population densities vary among GMUs.

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2017 SEASON



The prospects for harvesting a black bear in District 16 remain good to excellent. Although some hunters specifically target black bears, most bears are harvested opportunistically during general deer and elk seasons. Consequently, annual harvest and hunter success can vary quite a bit from one year to the next. The variability in the district is likely higher for hunters who specifically hunt black bears versus those who buy a bear tag just in case they see one while deer or elk hunting. During the 2016 season a total 55 bears were harvested within District 16 GMUs. An additional 19 bears were harvested in GMU 621 and 6 bears in GMU 624, which both include a portion of District 15. Hunter success during the 2016 season ranged from 2.4 percent in GMU 607 to 12.2 percent in GMU 615. Statewide and GMU harvest reports are summarized in the two tables Table 1 and Table 2. The percentage of male and female black bear harvest is also represented in the Harvest Report Table.

Table 1: Black bear harvest and hunter statistics for the 2016 hunting season in District 16 bear management units

WASHINGTON STATEWIDE BLACK BEAR HARVEST STATISTICS FOR THE 2016 HUNTING SEASON						
BMU	Bear Management Unit Name	Total Harvest	Number Hunters	Hunter Success Rate	Hunter Days	Days/Kill
1	Coastal	158	3,044	5.2%	28,992	183.5
2	Puget Sound	105	1,892	5.5%	16,393	156.1

Table 2: Black bear harvest reports for District 16 GMUs

GMU	Fall Male Harvest	Fall Female Harvest	Total Harvest	Number Hunters	Hunter Success	Hunter Days	Days/Kills
BMU 1 - COASTAL							
601 - HOKO	2	0	2	39	5.2%	458	229
602 - DICKEY	6	4	10	77	13%	641	64
603 - PYSHT	4	8	12	103	11.6%	846	71
607 - SOL DUC	2	0	2	81	2.4%	744	372
612 - GOODMAN	3	0	3	68	4.4%	685	228
615 - CLEARWATER	23	3	26	212	12.2%	1,439	55
618 - MATHENY	3	3	6	67	9%	397	66
621 - OLYMPIC	13	6	19	278	6.8%	1,693	89
BMU 2 - PUGET SOUND							
624 - COYLE	5	2	7	118	6%	932	133

HOW TO LOCATE AND HARVEST A BLACK BEAR

State DNR and federal (USFS) lands continue to provide the best availability for bear hunting within the district. Hunters are encouraged to scout for signs of bears (scat and tree bark peeling) in regenerating timber stands. Similar to deer, access behind gated roads is largely available to those willing to walk or mountain bike, and there are ample numbers of clear cuts/younger age class regeneration units that will attract bears. At higher elevations, those willing to hike in/pack out can pursue bears in classic environments where spot-and-stalk opportunities await. The USFS has a website with forest health maps that identify areas where bear damage has been detected from aerial surveys. You can find the [Aerial Forest Health Detection Maps](#) online. A check of these maps may provide a person with ideas on where to scout for bear.

Scouting is an extremely important factor that hunters should consider when specifically hunting for black bears in District 16. Although black bears are fairly common and occur in some areas at high densities, they are seen infrequently because of the thick vegetation that dominates the Olympic Peninsula landscape. Black bears can occur in a variety of habitat types, so it can be difficult to narrow down where to search for them. In the early fall, hunters should focus their efforts at higher elevations and in open terrain (e.g. open hillsides) and clear-cut areas. Huckleberries ripen throughout the summer, but in the early fall the most berries remaining are typically at higher elevations. A good berry patch yielding lots of fruit would be a good place to hunt. Bears can also be located in recent timber harvests that contain a large number of berry-producing shrubs, including huckleberries, serviceberries, snowberries, blackberries, salmonberries, thimbleberries, and salal berries. During the fall, hunters need to find openings with these characteristics and hike through them to see if there is any bear sign. If they do find fresh sign, odds are there is a bear frequenting the area. If hunters are patient and sit for extended periods of time watching these areas, they stand a reasonable chance of harvesting a bear.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Bear hunters are strongly urged not to shoot sows with cubs. Sows may be accompanied by cubs that tend to lag behind when traveling. Cubs may be located in trees or hidden in dense vegetation in the vicinity. Please observe and be patient before shooting. Several orphaned cubs were reported and then captured in Region 6 last season. Remember if you harvest a bear, it is mandatory to submit a premolar tooth. Tooth envelopes are available at WDFW offices. The premolar tooth is located behind the canine tooth (toward the throat) of the upper jaw. The use of hounds and/or bait to hunt black bear is prohibited statewide (RCW77.15.245).



COUGAR



GENERAL INFORMATION, MANAGEMENT GOALS, AND POPULATION STATUS

Cougars occur throughout District 16, but local densities can vary among GMUs. Cougars in District 16 are managed with the primary objective of maintaining a stable cougar population. The statewide goals for cougar are: 1. Preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage cougar and their habitats to ensure healthy, productive populations. 2. Minimize human/cougar conflict. 3. Manage cougar for a variety of recreational, educational and aesthetic purposes including hunting, scientific study, cultural and ceremonial uses by Native Americans, wildlife viewing, and photography. 4. Manage statewide cougar populations for a sustained yield. 5. Improve our understanding of predator-prey relationships.

Beginning in 2012, WDFW changed cougar harvest management throughout Washington. The biggest change was shifting away from using season length or permit seasons to manage the number of cougar harvested, and instead using a standard liberal season coupled with harvest guidelines. The intent was to have a longer season, without any hunting implement restrictions,

and only close cougar seasons in specific areas if harvest reached or exceeded a harvest guideline.

To accomplish harvest goals, WDFW established a series of hunt areas with standard season dates of September 1 through March 31. Beginning in the 2015 hunting season and then continuing in 2017, cougar season dates were extended through April 30. However, to hunt cougars after March 31 in a unit open for cougar harvest, hunters need to purchase a 2018 hunting license and cougar tag. Harvest numbers are examined starting January 1 and any hunt area that meets or exceeds the harvest guideline may be closed. Anyone planning to hunt cougar after January 1 is advised to confirm the cougar season is open in the desired hunting area. Hunters can call 1-866-364-4868 to determine if a specific hunt area is open after December 31. Harvest guidelines for each Hunt Area located in District 16 for 2017 are provided in Table 3.

For more information related to the harvest guidelines management approach, please visit [WDFW's website](#).

Table 3: Harvest guidelines and the reported 2016-2017 harvest for the three cougar hunt areas located in District 16

Hunt Area	Harvest Guideline	2016-2017 Harvest
	2016-2017	
601, 602, 603, 612	5-7	2
607, 615	4	2
621, 624	None	7

WHAT TO EXPECT DURING THE 2017 SEASON

Most cougar harvest within the district comes from opportunistic encounters while hunters are pursuing deer, elk, or other activities. The total cougar harvest in District 16 can vary from year to year. See Status and Trend Report below in Table 4. A total of eight cougars (six males and two females) were harvested during the general cougar hunt in 2016. See Table 4. The highest harvest last season was in GMU 621. See the [Washington Big Game Hunting pamphlet](#) or the WDFW website for more information regarding cougar hunting in specific GMUs within the district. Cougars are widespread in the forest lands of District 16. Areas supporting high numbers of deer and elk provide great opportunity for hunting cougar. Many of the cougars sealed in 2016 by the assistant district biologist were harvested by hunters who simply encountered the cougars while actually out deer or elk hunting. See photos below. Enforcement officers in the district have reported low cougar hunting pressure in most GMUs in previous years.

Table 4: Cougar harvest in District 16 for the 2013-14, 2014-15, and 2015-16 seasons.

Cougar Status and Trend Report 2016				
	2013-2014 HARVEST	2014-2015 HARVEST	2015-2016 HARVEST	3-Year Mean Harvest
GMUs 601, 602, 603, 612	3	1	3	2
GMUs 607, 615	1	0	1	1
GMUs 621, 624, 627, 633	5	1	2	3
Total	9	2	6	6



Table 5: Total cougar harvest in the PMU with District 16 GMUs. Harvest of male and female cougars are represented.

Statewide totals

GENERAL HUNTING				DEPREDATION				OTHER TAKE				COMBINED
Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Total
108	107	5	220	30	16	0	46	4	5	2	11	277

Population Management Unit (PMU) totals by GMU

GENERAL HUNTING				DEPREDAATION				OTHER TAKE				COMBINED	
Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Total	
PMU 42													
GMU 603 - PYSHT													
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	
PMU 42 TOTALS													
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	
PMU 43													
GMU 607 - SOL DUC													
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
GMU 615 - CLEARWATER													
1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
PMU 43 TOTALS													
2	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	
PMU 45													
GMU 621 - OLYMPIC													
3	2	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	
GMU 624 - COYLE													
0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	2	
GMU 633 - MASON													
0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	
PMU 45 TOTALS													
3	3	0	6	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	8	

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

It is unlawful to kill or possess spotted cougar kittens (usually less than 80 pounds) or adult cougars accompanied by spotted kittens. Cougar hunters are strongly urged to search for possible multiple tracks when pursuing an animal. Female cougars may have kittens located in trees or in dense vegetation in their vicinity. Please be very observant and patient before shooting. Last season two orphaned cougar kittens had to be captured by WDFW enforcement officers and biologists near Joyce. One kitten later died and the other kitten will remain in captivity at a zoo. Remember if you harvest a cougar, there are mandatory reporting and sealing requirements. The use of hounds to hunt cougars is prohibited statewide except during cougar management removals authorized by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.



NOTABLE CHANGES

A 2018 cougar license and tag will be required to hunt cougar in April 2018.

DUCKS

COMMON SPECIES

The majority of the waterfowl hunting opportunity in District 16 is east of Port Angeles, centered in the Lower Dungeness Basin. The basin has a high density of wintering waterfowl and holds about 7 percent of the western Washington breeding waterfowl population.

Keep in mind that trumpeter swan numbers have increased in the Dungeness valley in the past five years and they have been documented near the river mouth. All waterfowl hunters are encouraged to know all identification features for trumpeter swans and snow geese. It is illegal to shoot trumpeter swans.

CONCENTRATION AREAS

District biologists have focused on documenting areas with high waterfowl concentrations in Clallam County during the last several years, mapping high use areas during breeding and wintering periods.

The Dungeness Basin has proven to be an area of consistently high waterfowl concentrations, even amidst the ongoing development of open space habitats. Fortunately, there remains a rich mix of farmland, wetlands, coastal habitats and conserved open space that retains the necessary food and cover for many wintering waterfowl. Concentrations of waterfowl in freshwater habitats diminish drastically west of the Elwha and Lyre Rivers.



Four North American migratory bird flyways

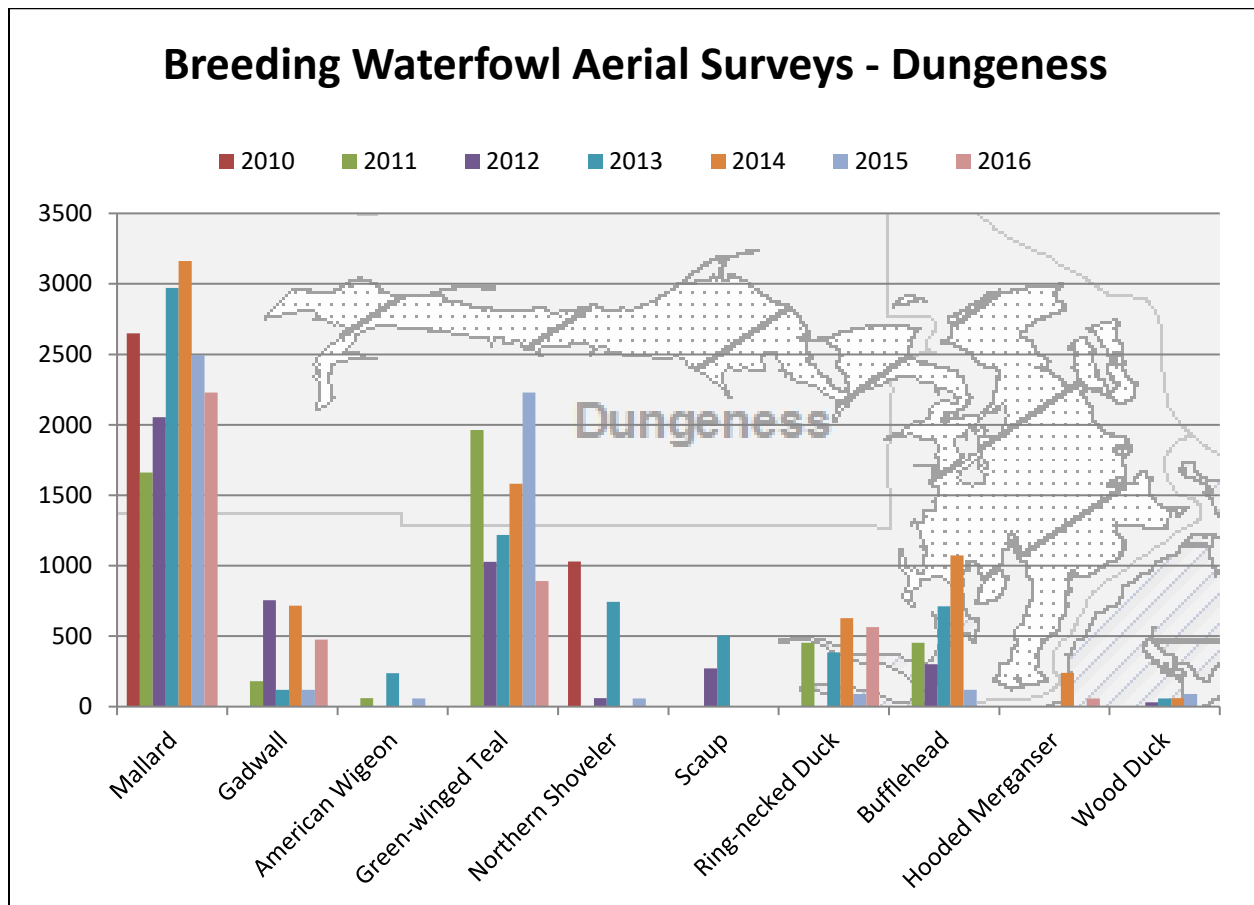
POPULATION STATUS

Midwinter waterfowl survey counts in District 16 showed an increase from 11,611 in 2013 to 18,379 in 2014, representing 2 percent of all waterfowl counted in the state. Midwinter populations include resident and migratory populations. The links below provide more information on the population status.

- [USFWS Waterfowl Population Status 2016](#)
- [USFWS Trends in Duck Breeding Populations 1955-2015](#) (Discontinued in 2016)

- The [Four Flyways April 2012 Updated Map](#) (Figure 38) shows the flyways.

Breeding population trends in Dungeness were showing an increase through 2014, then a drop in 2015 and 2016. In 2010, new methods were adopted for western Washington breeding waterfowl surveys, shifting from ground counts to conducting aerial surveys. The Dungeness transect counts have ranged from just under 4000 to 7500. The Dungeness count has been about 10 percent of the total breeding ducks in Washington from 2010 to 2016. Washington breeding waterfowl population monitoring for 2016 can be found in the [2016 Game Status and Trend Report](#) on pages 240-258. The greatest factor influencing brood production in the district continues to be loss of habitat to development and increasing human disturbance. Waterfowl numbers are expected to remain moderate in District 16.



Breeding waterfowl survey counts – Dungeness Transects, including nearby Elwha, Chimacum, and Quilcene habitats

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2017 PROSPECTS

There is limited access to where you can hunt waterfowl in District 16. Some locals in the western portion of the district conduct jump shooting in pools and side channels of the west end rivers, along with other small ponds and flooded gravel pit areas. In 2016, there were 6,639 ducks harvested by hunters in Clallam County, and 2,325 ducks harvested by hunters in Jefferson County.

The [Office of the Washington State Climatologist](#) reports “The [Climate Prediction Center] outlook for August-September-October (ASO) is calling for increased chances of above normal temperatures for the entire state and the entire country. For precipitation, there are increased chances of below normal August through October precipitation for nearly the entire state. The Olympic Peninsula and the northern Puget Sound regions have the highest chances of receiving below normal precipitation for this period.” Lower precipitation levels in late summer and early fall will likely result in less forage for wintering waterfowl. This could result in higher concentrations of waterfowl in the saturated habitats or it could cause the waterfowl to move on to other areas seeking adequate forage for the wintering months.

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

Public saltwater hunting opportunities are more numerous than freshwater options in District 16, albeit more difficult in many ways. The regulations and landownerships, including tideland ownerships, make it necessary for the hunter to have a good plan. Another complication includes the US Fish & Wildlife Service Dungeness Wildlife Refuge. Hunting is not allowed on the refuge and some of the refuge boundaries are difficult to determine in the field.

***IMPORTANT INFORMATION IF YOU HUNT FROM A BOAT** – When hunting from a boat, hunters should ensure the boat anchor is not down on private tidelands without permission. Boat hunters must not go onto private land without permission to retrieve any waterfowl shot. However, hunters should be aware they could run the risk of violating the wastage law if they do not retrieve the waterfowl they’ve shot. Therefore, it is essential hunters be aware of property ownership, especially when hunting from a boat.

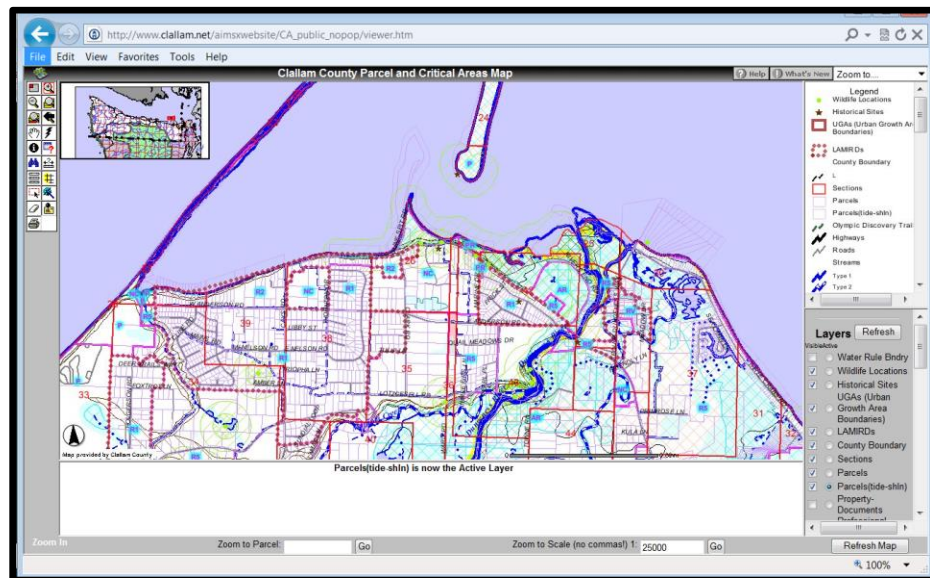
Shoreline/Tidelands: There are some private landowners who allow limited hunting access along the saltwater shoreline. Typically, local signage refers to a phone number or contact information, and in some cases the signage spells out the conditions of access. Because these vary from year to year, the hunter must make a tour of the area and find out the current arrangements. Hunters should make sure they will have the ability to retrieve ducks, keeping in mind the ownerships where they have permission to hunt and the adjacent ownership where they do not have that permission.



Portion of DNR Quadrangle Map displaying public tidelands in blue

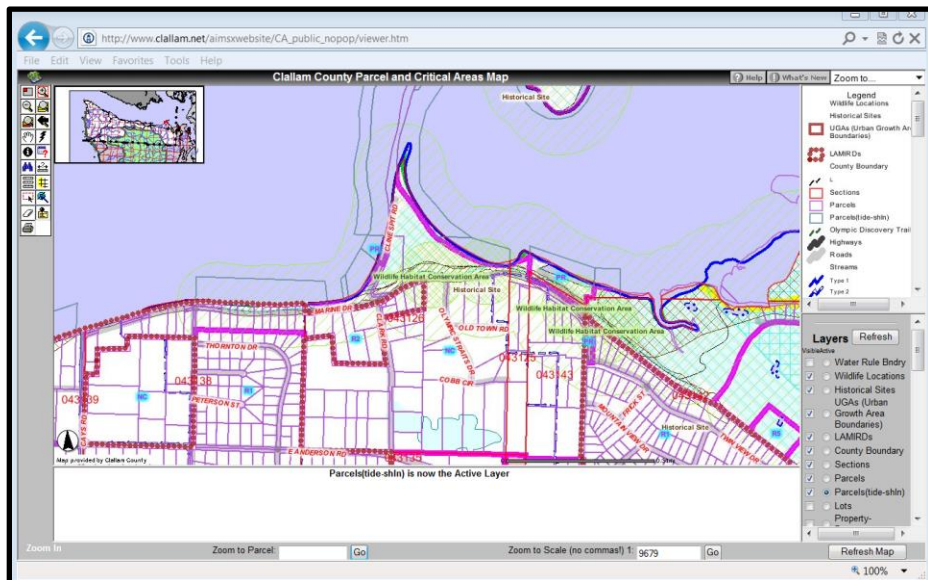
For Clallam County, tideland ownership can be determined on the Assessor maps. Assessor maps can be retrieved on the internet using these websites:

Clallam County Map links: <http://www.clallam.net/maps/> or http://www.clallam.net/aimsxwebsite/CA_public_nopop/viewer.htm



Make sure you have the parcel (tide-shoreline) layer checked and active circle dotted, and the scale set at 1:25,000 or less.

Use the icons on the top left to zoom in and choose the lightning bolt icon, then select tideland parcels and click on them. The information on ownership will come up.



Clallam County links and maps showing public tidelands

PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

Most all freshwater waterfowl hunting areas in the Dungeness Basin are on private lands. Public land hunting opportunities include the newly established Lower Dungeness Unit at the mouth of the Dungeness River. Some hunters find hunting opportunities in the near-shore areas of bays and along the shoreline of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, both on foot and by boat. Hunting violations remain a concern on small water bodies and along the saltwater shorelines in the district. Hunters are urged to obey all state and county regulations at sites near residential areas to avoid potential future closures. Be sure to check the 2017 Migratory Waterfowl Regulation pamphlet for additional requirements before hunting sea ducks (long-tailed ducks, scoter, harlequin, and goldeneye) in western Washington. The local seaduck populations have been studied for many years and the sea duck management strategies publication has been made available [online](#).

North Olympic Wildlife Area includes the [Lower Dungeness Unit](#). This unit contains multiple disjoined parcels located about five miles north of Sequim. Seventy-five acres of this unit can be hunted north of East Anderson Road and west of the Dungeness River. Public access is supported by a small parking area, an information kiosk containing site rules, and a restroom. There are freshwater ponds located in the main field below the parking area, but the main hunting area for this unit is located on the tidelands of Dungeness Bay, adjacent to the river's mouth. A variety of dabbling ducks, diving ducks, and geese have been documented at the unit.

Hunters are required to walk into the main hunting area. Rivers End Road is a privately owned road and cannot be used to access the tidelands. It is approximately a half mile to reach the main hunting areas on this unit. Hunting is permitted only on Wednesdays, Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays throughout the regular waterfowl season. A 15 shotgun shell restriction is in effect for this unit. Designated blind locations for first-come, first-served use will be established for this season. Detailed information will be posted on the kiosk and on the Lower Dungeness Unit webpage. The hunting area along the tidelands is privately owned and is managed by WDFW through a temporary land use agreement. Misuse of this area may result in the loss of future public access.

Useful Links:

- [Lower Dungeness Wildlife Area](#)
- [Lower Dungeness-River's End Site Hunting Rules](#)
- The [Dungeness Recreation Area](#) County Park no longer allows hunting.

GEESE AND BRANT

COMMON SPECIES

Typical hunter participation for geese occurred in Clallam County and Jefferson County, with harvest slightly increasing from the previous year.

Brant: Brant hunting is opening for Clallam and Whatcom counties on Jan. 6, 10, and 13, 2018. The daily bag limit is two brant and the Possession Limit is six brant.

Brant management had been closed for hunting in Clallam and Jefferson Counties for decades. Brant management was complicated by the varying productivity of subpopulations, some enduring high nesting failures that led to restrictions on the hunting grounds. The 2014 report on management of brant in Washington is available on [WDFW's website](#).

The way this first season plays out is key and will influence how the hunt is managed in future years. Please be respectful of private landowners and avoid conflicts with other recreational users in the area. The brant are typically found along the Dungeness shorelines that hold eelgrass but also occur in other locations from Port Angeles to Sequim Bay. It may be worthwhile to become familiar with the other regular uses in potential brant hunting areas to reduce the chance that a location will have a conflicting use on the few days the hunt is open.

POPULATION STATUS

Canada geese populations continue to increase on the east side of the district.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2017 PROSPECTS

Clallam County goose harvest in 2016-17 was 379, averaging about 8 percent of Region 6's entire goose harvest, the same percentage as during the 2015-16 season, a drop from the 12 percent reported for the 2014-15 season. The harvest information is shown in the [Washington State Migratory Waterfowl & Upland Game Seasons](#) pamphlet, on page 34.

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The small acreages and patchy ownership makes pass shooting inadvisable. Local hunters were quite successful in previous seasons using a decoy spread and blinds. Permission to hunt on private lands would need to be obtained and all [firearm regulations](#) must be followed. Many agricultural fields have residential properties in the vicinity, so hunters must be aware of all safety concerns.

PUBLIC LAND OPPORTUNITIES

Most hunt opportunities are on private agricultural lands containing barley in GMU 624.

FOREST GROUSE

SPECIES AND GENERAL HABITAT CHARACTERISTICS

Hunting within any of the forest lands throughout District 16 should offer good opportunities for harvesting grouse. Prime forest grouse hunting may be found on DNR and USFS lands within the district. The harvest of grouse in Clallam County rivals all other counties within Region 6.

Ruffed and sooty (formerly classified as blue) grouse are present throughout public and private forest lands in District 16. The prospects for harvesting sooty grouse go up with increasing elevation. Hunters can expect the greatest success along trails and ridgelines above 2,000-3,000 feet, within timber stands with huckleberry, grouse whortleberry, and other forage plants. Hunters targeting ruffed grouse should focus on elevations below 2,500 feet, particularly in riparian forest habitats, early seral forests (5-25 years old), and deciduous-conifer mixed forest types.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2017 PROSPECTS

Participation in grouse hunting in District 16 had declined since 2009, when Clallam County harvest peaked at 6,350 by 1,202 hunters and Jefferson County harvest had 3,839 grouse by 1,502 hunters. The 2016 harvest totals for Clallam County were 3,311 grouse. Jefferson County harvest was 1,044 grouse in 2016.

Habitat conditions certainly play a role, but spring weather, and its effect on young, is also a huge factor in grouse production and hunting prospects for the fall. Despite a wet March this year, April and May weather should have been favorable to grouse broods, hopefully leading to a productive grouse hunting season.

PHEASANTS

District 16 does not have viable populations of wild pheasant and there are no longer any pheasant release sites in the district. Due to changes in management direction from Clallam County Parks & Recreation, hunting pheasants at the Dungeness Recreation Area ended with the 2012 season.

For information on current pheasant release sites, check this link to the [Western Washington Pheasant Release Program](#).

QUAIL

There is a fair abundance of California (valley) quail in the eastern portion of District 16. They are quite common in the Dungeness Valley, but hunting opportunities can be challenging due to predominately private ownership. Quail, like the deer, thrive in the Dungeness habitats that include a mix of open grass, shrublands, and forest. Some quail hunting opportunities can be found on public lands located in the lower foothills in clearcuts or any early successional habitats. The number of quail reported harvested in Clallam County was 211 quail in 2016, only 2 reported harvested in Jefferson County.

TURKEYS

District 16 is not managed for wild turkeys and the species remains relatively rare here. Some turkeys were transplanted in the Dungeness drainage 30-40 years ago, but there is no harvestable population present. WDFW receives occasional reports of individuals or small groups of turkeys within GMU 603. They are likely domestic turkeys that escaped from a farm that raised turkeys in the Joyce area. There are basically no prospects for hunting wild turkeys in District 16.

BAND-TAILED PIGEONS

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Band-tailed pigeons were quite abundant in District 16 in years past. Local hunters reported seeing clouds of them in drainages, such as McDonald Creek, on the east side of the district back in the 1950s.

HARVEST TRENDS AND 2017 PROSPECTS

The reported harvest of band-tails in this district is relatively low, but the resource is available throughout the district in good numbers. WDFW Enforcement officers remind hunters that they must have all required hunting licenses, along with the special migratory bird authorization and the band-tailed pigeon harvest card. It is mandatory to report all harvest to improve management of the species. More information about population monitoring and harvests is available in the following report: [2016 USFWS Band-tailed Pigeon Population Status](#).

WHERE AND HOW TO HUNT BAND-TAILED PIGEONS

Band-tailed pigeons are most prevalent in the district along marine estuaries, shorelines, and forest roads where they forage on berries. Hunters are encouraged to search for areas with elderberry and cascara present. Band-tailed pigeons often congregate around these food sources.

OTHER SMALL GAME SPECIES

Mourning Dove

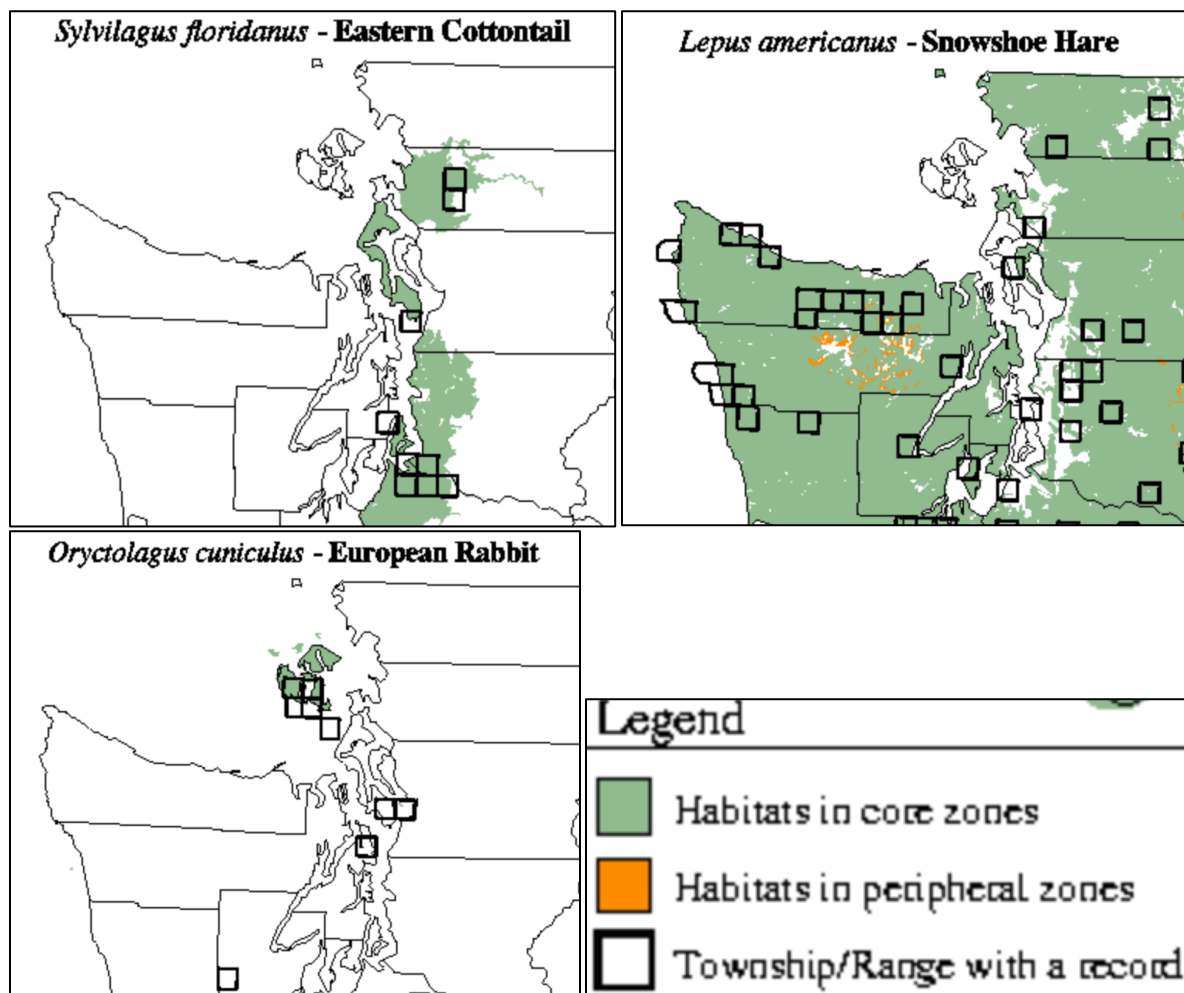
District 16 has not been a major dove hunting area, although eastern Clallam County has lots of doves. The estimated harvest for 2016 was 64 doves and in 2015 67 doves were harvested by 13 hunters in Clallam County. Reported harvest in Jefferson County during 2016 was 11 doves. The dove population status report can be found at [2016 USFWS Mourning Dove Population Status https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/surveys-and-data/Population-status/MourningDove/MourningDovePopulationStatus16.pdf](https://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/pdf/surveys-and-data/Population-status/MourningDove/MourningDovePopulationStatus16.pdf)

Snowshoe Hare & Cottontail Rabbit

Most all of the rabbits encountered on the Olympic Peninsula will be snowshoe hare (see range maps below). Snowshoe hare are readily observed along forested roads in the western half of District 16, and will be found throughout the district, usually along forested edges. Annual district harvest is erratic, ranging from zero (about 450 hunt days, 2011 report) to over 300 (and 800-1200 hunt days, 2005 and 2008 report). The opportunity is always there, with a harvest per

unit effort expected to range between 0.25-0.70/day. More information on the snowshoe hare can be found at the following links:

- [Snowshoe Hare - Canadian Wildlife Federation](#)
- http://naturemappingfoundation.org/natmap/maps/wa/mammals/WA_snowshoe_hare.html
- http://naturemappingfoundation.org/natmap/maps/wa/mammals/WA_eastern_cottontail.html
- http://naturemappingfoundation.org/natmap/maps/wa/mammals/WA_european_rabbit.html
- http://naturemappingfoundation.org/natmap/maps/wa/mammals/WA_nuttalls_cottontail.html



TRIBAL HUNTING

District 16 is within the ceded area of numerous treaty tribes on the Olympic Peninsula. WDFW and tribes cooperatively manage wildlife populations. Tribal hunting often occurs concurrent with WDFW hunting seasons. Tribes set their own seasons and bag limits. Tribal Enforcement personnel are responsible for ensuring tribal hunting regulations, which may differ from state regulations.

Tribal big game harvest reports are available at [Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Big Game Harvest Reports](#).

FIREARM AND WEAPON RESTRICTIONS

These diverse mixtures of ownerships and jurisdictions also present different combinations of firearm restriction regulations and ordinances. The three main firearm restriction regulations most relevant to hunters are the following:

- WDFW – Firearm Restriction-unlawful to hunt with centerfire or rimfire rifles in “The portion of the Coyle (GMU 624) in Clallam County.” Page 88 in [Washington's 2017 Big Game Hunting Seasons & Regulations](#) pamphlet.
- Clallam County Code – [Clallam County Firearms Discharge Restrictions](#)
- Jefferson County Code – [Jefferson County NO SHOOTING AREAS](#)

MAJOR PUBLIC LANDS

With mixed ownership comes a complexity of access rules by various governmental and private entities. Make sure you have acquired the necessary permits to drive on public and private land in the area you decide to explore.

Here are some public access permits to be aware of and that you may need depending on your destination.

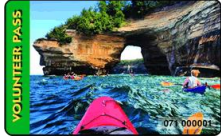


[Discover Pass](#) for state parks, DNR, & WDFW



[Federal Agency-Interagency Annual Pass](#) for US Forest Service, Bureau of Land

Management, US Fish & Wildlife Service



[Federal Agency Interagency Volunteer Pass](#) for US Forest Service, Bureau of

Land Management, US Fish & Wildlife Service

The interagency passes include access on National Park Service and Bureau of Reclamation ownership. Keep in mind that many public lands on the Olympic Peninsula are not open to hunting, including Olympic National Park, most all Washington State Parks, & Clallam County Parks.

PRIVATE INDUSTRIAL FORESTLANDS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Private timberlands have various access and road closure procedures, so it is prudent to determine current ownership for a target location and the requirements to obtain permission to hunt. One company that has retained a consistent access program over the years is Merrill & Ring Pysht Tree Farm in GMU 603. Their permits provide access during most (but not all) hunting seasons. Several other forest industry ownerships have other access systems in place. Hunters are encouraged to scout the areas they are considering hunting and pay close attention to the signs on all roads. Signs are often the landowner's primary method of informing the public on which areas are open to hunting.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR MAJOR TIMBER COMPANIES

Rayonier, Inc.

Website: <http://www.rayonier.com/>

IFP Office (360) 452-1351

Forks Office (360) 374-6565

Port Angeles (360) 457-2329

Information on Access Permits

<http://property.rayonierhunting.com/Permits/PermitsHome.aspx>

<http://property.rayonierhunting.com/AvailableAreas/FindProperties.aspx>

Previous season – 2014 online documents

http://property.rayonierhunting.com/CreateDocument/PermitMapImages/2014_General%20Access_Map.pdf

GMU 603 – Rayonier ownership

http://property.rayonierhunting.com/CreateDocument/PermitMapImages/2014_DeepCreek_Map.pdf

GMU 602 – Rayonier ownership

http://property.rayonierhunting.com/CreateDocument/PermitMapImages/2014_DickeyPermitArea_Map.pdf

GMU 615 – Rayonier ownership

http://property.rayonierhunting.com/CreateDocument/PermitMapImages/2014_KalalochRidge_Map.pdf

Green Crow

Website: <http://www.greencrow.com/contact-us/locations/>

Port Angeles (360) 452-3325

Merrill & Ring

Website: <http://www.merrillring.com/contacts/>

Port Angeles (360) 452-2367

Email: contact@merrillring.com

Cascade Timberlands

Website: <http://www.cascadetimberlands.com>

OTHER MAJOR LANDOWNERS

Hoh River Trust

Website: <http://hohrivertrust.publishpath.com//Websites/hohrivertrust/Images/webmap.jpg>

HUNTING ORGANIZATIONS

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Douglas Doherty

Phone: (989) 736-4234

ddoherty@rmef.org

Jefferson County Sportsmen's Association

Email: info@JeffersonCountySportsmen.org

P.O. Box 737, Port Townsend, WA 98368

Sportsmen for Wild Olympics

Email: info@sportsmenforwildolympics.org

Website: www.SportsmenForWildOlympics.org

Wapiti Bowmen Archery Club

Email: wapitibowclub@gmail.com

374 E Arnette Rd, 98362 Port Angeles

Website: <https://www.wapitibowmen.org/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Wapiti-Bowmen-180948655312545/>

Eyes in the Woods

P.O. Box 2406, Olympia, WA 98507

Website: <http://www.eyesinthewoods.org/index.php/en/?Itemid=419>

West End Sportsmen's Club-Forks

Sportsman Club Road, Forks, WA 98331

Phone: (360) 374-5420

Washington Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

Joe Mirasole & Gregg Bafundo

Website: http://www.backcountryhunters.org/washington_bha

Ducks Unlimited Olympic District

Chairman Mike Luecht

Email: papaluke@wavecable.com

Website: <http://www.ducks.org/washington/wa-content/state-contacts/?poe=stateHomeIcon>

Izaak Walton League of America Greater Seattle Chapter

A. William Way

Email: bway@watershedco.com

3451 E. Lake Sammamish Ln. N.E., Sammamish, WA 98074

Washington Brant Foundation

Maynard Axelson

Email: info@wabrant.org

15929 Fir Island Rd, Mt Vernon, WA 98273

Phone: (360) 445-6681

Website: <http://www.wabrant.org/>

Washington Outdoor Women (WOW)

<http://www.washingtonoutdoorwomen.org>

<http://washingtonoutdoorwomen.org/register/> - Workshops

WOW

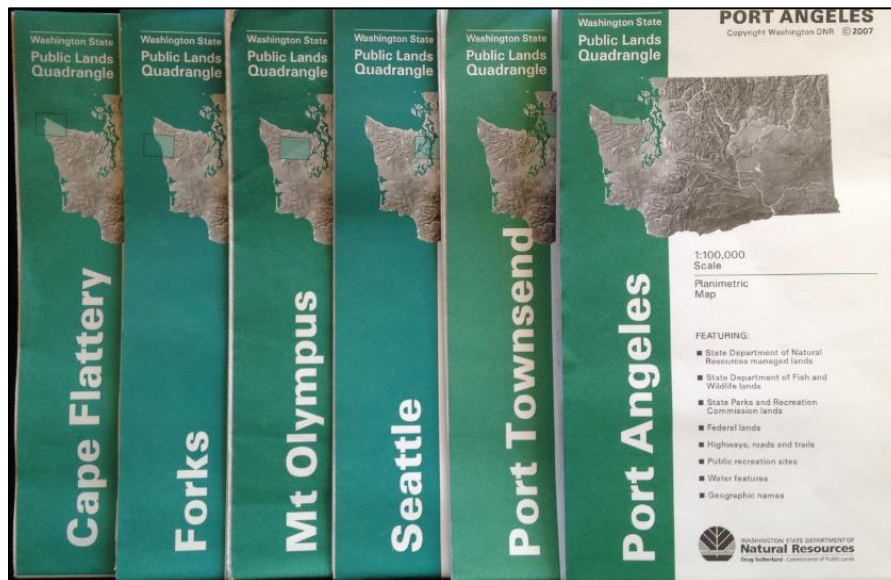
P.O. Box 1656

Bellevue, WA 98009-1656

If you know of an organization that should be included in this document, please contact Biologist McMillan at anita.mcmillan@dfw.wa.gov.

ONLINE TOOLS AND MAPS

Because land ownership can be very confusing, District Biologist McMillan recommends a set of these DNR maps which you can order online at [Buy Maps, Aerial Photos, or Survey Data | WA - DNR](#).



Often these DNR maps are available to buy at Swains & Browns in Port Angeles or at Thriftway in Forks

These DNR maps have the best combination of land ownership and current roads. However, keep in mind there have been several DNR & private forest land ownership exchanges in recent years that won't show up on these maps. DNR's website has current DNR ownership displayed at [DNR Ownership](#).

Other maps that can be helpful for select areas include:

Forest Service Online:

Forest Service maps can be obtained free online at <http://freegeographytools.com/2007/updated-usgs-24k-topographic-maps-from-the-us-forest-service>

Forest Service Maps to purchase:

USFS also sells forest district maps that are very useful, as are the custom correct maps shown on the same page.

Link: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/olympic/maps-pubs/?cid=stelprdb5195398>

East end of WDFW District 16 is the Hood Canal Ranger District/North End map.

West end of WDFW District 16 are the Pacific Ranger District/North End & South End maps.